

XXXIV

A



Practical Commentary,

OR AN

EXPOSITION

WITH

NOTES

On the Epistle of

S^t JUDE.

Delivered (for the most part)

In sundry weekly Lectures, at Stoke-
Newington in *Middlesex*.

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The Second Edition corrected.

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TO THE
Religious and Honourable
LADY,
LETITIA POPHAM;
Wife to Colonel
ALEXANDER POPHAM.

MADAM,

TIS a lovely Conjunction when
Goodneß and Greatneß meet to-
gether : Persons of Estate and
Respect in the world have more
temptations and hinderances than others ; but
greater obligations to own God ; the great
Landlord of the World expecteth a Rent from
every Country-Cottage , but a large Revenue
a 3 from

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from great Houses : Now usually it falleth out
 a *Qui majores terras possunt, minores censui solvunt.* Pari-
 so, that ^a *they that hold the greatest Farms pay the least Rent* ; never is the Lord more neglected and dishonoured, then in great mens Houses, in the very face of all his bounty ; if Religion chance to get in there, it is soon worn out again ; though vices live long in a family, and run in a blood from Father to Son, yet 'tis a rare case to see strictness of Religion carried on for three or four descents ; 'twas the honour of *Abrahams house*, that from Father to Son, for a long while, they were *Heirs of the same promise*, Heb. 11. 9. but where is there such a succession to be found in the houses of our Gentry ? The Father perchance professeth godliness, (for ἡλικία, saith the
 b 1 Cor. 1. 26. Apostle, ^b *not many noble, &c.* there are a few, he doth not say, there are none) and a carnal Son cometh and turneth all out of doors, as if he were ashamed of his Fathers God : The Causes of this mischief may be supposed to be these. 1. *Plenty ill-governed disposeth to vice and sin*, as a rank soil is apt to breed weeds.
 c *Coguntur esse mali, ne viles habeantur.* Salvian. 2. *Brave Spirits* (as the world counteth them) think ^c *strictness* inglorious, and the power of Religion a base thing, that taketh off from their

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their *Grandeur ad Esteem*: a loose owning of Christianity is honourable, since the Kings of the earth have counted it one of the fairest Flowers of their Crowns to be stiled, the *Catholick King*; the *most Christian King*; the *Defender of the Faith*, &c. But a true submission to the power of it is made a scorn, as being contrary to that *liberty of fashions, vanity of complement*, and some *Gentile customs*, which in a fond compliance with the humour of the age they are loth to part with; 'twere a rude zeal to deny them *honest civilities*; but certain *Customes and Modes* there are inconsistent with the *severity of Religion*, which rather then men will part with, they will even break with God himself. 3. The *Marriage of children into carnal families*, wherein they consult rather with the *greatness of their House*, then the *continuing of Christs interest* in their Line and Posterity; how careful are they that they should match in their own Rank for *blood and Estate*? should they not be as careful for *Religion* also? but even *good people* give a suspicion sometimes that they do not believe what they do *profess*; That this is the ready way to undo all that hath been set on foot for God,

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d See Gen.

6. 1, 2, 3.

Pfal. 106.

38.

Neh. 13. 25.

26.

is evident by ^d *Scripture and Experience*; in *Scripture* we read of *Jehoram*, who is said to *walk in the way of the Kings of Israel, for the daughter of Ahab was his wife*, 2 Kings 8. 18. and in Ecclesiastical History, of *Valens the Emperour*, who by marrying with an *Arian Lady*, was himself ensnared in that wicked opinion.

All this is spoken (*Madam*) to quicken you to the greater care in your Relations, that you may settle a *standing interest* for Jesus Christ so hopefully already begun in your House and Family; it will not be pleasing to you that I should publish upon the house top what God hath done for you, or enabled you to do for him; *Go on still and be faithful*; there are few (that I know in the world) who have more cause to honour God than you have.

That I have inscribed this *Commentary* to your name, will not seem strange to those that know my great *Obligations* to your Self, and your *worthy Husband*, and your interest in that ^e *beloved place and people*, among whom I have had so many *sweet opportunities* of enjoying, and (I hope) of *glorifying* God; and from whom I should never have removed, but upon those weighty *Causes and Considerations*

^e Stoke-Newington.

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tions which did even rend me from them : and though I am now transplanted, and owe very much service and respect elsewhere, yet that ^f *Noble Lord* that gave me the Call, will allow ^{The right Honourable, William, Earl of Bedford.} me *full time and leave* to pay my *old debts*, that afterward I may be the more in a capacity publicly to express my gratitude to himself.

If any should be so foolish as to object the *unsuitableness* of *Dedicating a Comment on the Scripture* to one of your Sex (as it seemeth some did to ^g *Jerom*) I shall not plead, that two of the Books of Scripture are named from ^{Hieron. Epist. 140.} Women, *Ruth* and *Esther* ; that *an Epistle* which maketh up a part of the *Canon* is inscribed to an *Elect Lady* ; that if this be a fault, ^h others have faulted in like kind before me ; ^{Hieron. to Celantia Asella, &c.} but onely that this is a *practical Commentary*, and surely in *matters of practise* (which is every Christians *Common interest*) your Sex hath a full share : though your *course of life* be more *private* and *confined*, yet you have your *service* ; Scriptures speak of the womans *gaining upon the Husband*, 1 Pet. 3. 1. *seasoning the Children*, Pro. 31. 1. 2 Tim. 1. 5. *incouraging the servants* in a way of *Godliness*, especially of
b their

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their own Sex, 'tis said, *Esther* 4. 16. I also and my maidens will fast likewise: these maidens were either *Jews*, and then it sheweth what servants should be taken into a nearer attendance, such as favour of Religion, See *Psal.* 101. 6. or else, which is more probable, such as she had instructed in the true Religion; for these maidens were appointed her by the *Eunuch*, and were before instructed in *Court-fashions*, *Esther* 2. 9. but that did not satisfie, she taketh them to instruct them in the knowledge of the true God, and it seemeth in her apartment had many opportunities of religious commerce with them in the Worship of God. Madam, how far you practice these Duties, it is not necessary that I should tell the World; persevere with cheerfulness, and in due time you shall reap if you faint not: the good Lord shed abroad the Comforts and Graces of his Spirit more abundantly into your heart, which is the unfeigned desire of him, who is

Madam,

Your most Obliged, and
respectively Observant

Tho. Manton.

The

The Epistle to the READER.

Good Reader,

THe people of God have ever been exercised with two sorts of Enemies, Persecutors and Sectaries : 'tis hard to say which is worst :

When the Christian Church began first to look forth in the world, there were adverse powers without ready to crush it, and Libertines, who (like worms bred within the body) sought to devour the entrails, and eat out the very bowels of it : The first Ring-leader was Simon Magus, and there followed Menander Saturninus, Basilides, Carpocrates, Cerinthus, Ebion, Cerdo, Marcion, Tatianus, Valentinus, and many others, who being once turned aside from the truth and the fellowship of the faithful, lost all awe of God, and were given up to a sottish judgement, to believe all kind of fables and fancies. The monsters of Africa came from the unnatu-

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ral commixtures of the beasts running wild in the desarts ; so when men had once broken through the hedge, mingling their own fancies with the Word of God, by an unnatural production, they brought forth such monstrous and absurd Opinions.

In succeeding ages the devil hath often plaid over the old game ; sometimes oppressing the Church by the tyranny of Pseudo-christians, as many Martyrs being made by Anti-christian, as Pagan persecutions, Revel. 14. 13. at other times corrupting the truth by error, or rendering it suspicious by the divisions about it : heresies revolve as fashions; and in the course of a few years, antiquated errors revive again, and that by their means who did not so much as know them by name.

When God first called his people out of Babylon by Luthers Reformation, and the Christian Religion began to be restored to its pristine purity, there was not only a Roman party to persecute, but a fanatical party to perplex the estate of reformation, and retard the course of the Gospel, as Histories do abundantly declare, especially Sleidan in his Commentaries.

What hath been our late experience, we all know,

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know, and have cause to bewail; as soon as we were freed from our hard task-masters, and a door of hope began to be opened to us, a swarm of Libertines have arisen among us, and do every day increase in number, power, and malice, and under various forms oppose the unquestionable interests of Jesus Christ, to the great scandal of reformation, and the sadning of the hearts of the godly. We seem to be ripe for a judgment, but from what corner the storm shall blow we cannot tell; some fear a return of Popery, and that a second deluge of Anti-christianisme shall overwhelm the Western Churches; the Papists (I confess) are dangerous, but the great and next fear I think to be from Libertines, and a yokeless generation of men, who are most reproachful to Religion, and most troublesome.

The spirit and drift of this Epistle is carried out mainly against this fanatical and Libertine party; and therefore I suppose it to be a mistake in D^r Willet, M^r Perkins, and others, when they would turn the edge of it against the Papists; I confess they had a temptation that way, these being the only Heretical party with whom the Church of God was then in suit, and symbolizing in many things with those of the other extreme,

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stream, as usually darkness, and darkness doth better agree then light and darkness : but certainly the party described here, are not a domineering Faction, that carry things by power and greatness, and height of natural abilities, as the Papists do ; but a creeping party, such as by fordid and clancular ways seek to undermine the Truth, a kind of mean and loose people, that vented monstrous and gross conceits chiefly out of envy against those that excelled in gifts and place ; and if our modern Ranters, Familists, Quakers, be not here described in their lively colours (as if the Apostle had lived to hear their blasphemous Expressions, and that contempt which they cast upon the Officers of the Church) I confess then I understand nothing of the whole Epistle. If the Judicious Reader let alone the larger discussion of the Observations, and go but over the Explications of each verse, he will soon find my Observation to be true.

What I have done through Grace, to the clearer understanding of the Apostles scope, and the larger Explanation of the common places here offered, I shall not mention, but leave to the Readers judgement : some will blame me for being too large, and others in many places for being for being
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ing too short ; I shall only let the first sort know, that in the larger Explications of points of Doctrine, I have rather satisfied the desires of others, then followed my own judgement ; who when these things were first delivered (which was long since) in the way of short Notes, were willing to hear the points more largely debated, and so I went over them again in a Sermon-fashion : if any blame me for being too short, let them know, that therein I have more satisfied my self, as keeping to the Laws of an expository Exercise. I confess I am so conscious to the many imperfections of this work, that the Reader had never been troubled with it, had it not been extorted from me by such importunity as I could not withstand : especially did I judge the publication needless, the Elaborate Commentary of my Reverend Brother, Mr. William Jenkins, being already printed ; but when I saw that we went different wayes in prosecuting the same Truth, that Objection ceased : seasonable things must be often urged, and the variety of method maketh the repetition grateful. I observe Gods providence in it, when divers men fall upon the same work, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every truth might be established. Beza (I remember)

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member) perswadeth Olevian to Print his Meditations on the Galatians, though many excellent Writers had but lately and diligently explained that Epistle: Dr. King, Dr. Abbot, and Dr. Benefield, all wrote upon Jonah, and with Approbation, neer about the same time. As much as my occasions would permit me; I consulted with my Reverend Brothers Book; and when I found any point at large discussed by him, I either omitted it, or mentioned it very briefly; so that his Labours will be necessary to supply the weaknesses of mine. This work hath been long in the Press; and no wonder, the Authour lying under such an oppression of Business, it being carried on by snatches and spare hours. The Tables I have collected with some diligence; the one of Scriptures, which are either vindicated, or largely illustrated, in this Commentary; the other of the principal matters, especially the common places here discussed: if by all thou findest any help in the way of thy Heavenly Calling; Bless God, and forget not to put up one prayer for

The meanest of the
Lords Servants

THO. MANTON.



AN
EXPOSITION
WITH
NOTES
On the EPISTLE of
JUDE.

VERSE I.

*Jude the Servant of Jesus Christ, and Brother of James,
to them that are sanctified by God the Father, preserved
in Jesus Christ, and called.*



His *Epistle*, as others, beginneth with usual *Christian salutations*; these are continued through the two first Verses, in which you have,

1. The person saluting, *Jude*, the Author of the *Epistle*.
2. The persons saluted, the Believers of that age.
3. The form of salutation, *Vers. 2.*

Mercy, and peace, and love be multiplied.

This first Verse presenteth us with the two first Circumstances,

ces, the *Saluter*, and the *Saluted*. 1. The *Saluter* is described by his name, *Judas*; his office and condition of life, *the servant of Jesus Christ*; by his kindred and relation, *and brother of James*. 2. The *Saluted* they are described, 1. By their condition, *καίτοις*, called, that is to be read first, as *Beza*. 2. By the effects and manifestations of it, which are two: 1. *Sanctified by God the Father*. 2. *Preserved in Jesus Christ*. These are the parts, I shall explain them branch by branch in the order propounded, with practical hints from each, which I shall handle in no fuller latitude than the present Text will allow.

1. The *Saluter*, and there his name *Judas*, called also *Thaddeus*, *Mat. 10. 3.* and *Lebbaeus*; these several names implying the same thing, and were given him either by the people or the Disciples; Partly to distinguish him from *Judas the Apostate*, partly to note his constancy in *confessing and praising God*; for so it signifieth, as you may see *Gen. 29. 35.* Now *Leah* said, *I will praise the Lord, therefore she called his name Judah*. Divers note hence,

Observations.

1. *That Christian names should be significant, such as may remember us of duty.* Again, 2. *That it is lawful to divulge or conceal our names in our writings, according as it may make for the glory of God, to do either the one or the other.* Jude mentioneth his name, but *Paul* doth not, or whosoever was the Author of the Epistle to the Hebrews. 3. *That godly men and wicked, may both be called by the same name:* So *Judas the Apostle*, and *Judas the Apostate*: There was *Enoch Cains son, Gen. 4. 17.* and *Enoch Seths son* of the Church line, *that walk'd with God, Gen. 5. 22* But to mention these things is more than enough; the next circumstance will afford us more.

2. His office and condition, *the Servant of Jesus Christ*. It is a thing usual with the Apostles to prefix this among other their honorary titles; as *Rom. 1. 1. Paul a servant of Jesus Christ*: so *Phil. 1. 1.* The greatest honor that he would put upon himself and *Timothy*, was this, *Paul and Timotheus the servants of Jesus Christ*. This term, *a servant of God or Christ*, in the use of Scripture, is several wayes applyed. 1. It may be understood of any kind of subserviency to Gods Will and secret Counsels, or instrumentality in the execution of his Decrees: so wicked men may be said to be Gods servants, so far forth as he serveth his designs of their endeavours: as *Cyrus* was Gods servant, because he should

should perform all his pleasure: so *Nebuchadnezzar*, Jer. 27. 6. *These things have I given into the hands of Nebuchadnezzar my servant.* 2. It noteth a pious care to perform Gods revealed Will; they that out of a sence of his love resign up themselves to do his Will, are called his servants: so he that is called in the Lord, whether he be bond or free, is said to be *Christs servant*, 1 Cor. 7. 22. So godly Masters are said to have the Lord for their Master, Eph. 6. 9. *Knowing that your Master is also in Heaven:* In the former place he saith, a servant is Gods freeman; and here, that a Master is Gods servant. 3. It noteth designation to any publique office for Gods glory; those that do more eminently or more nearly serve God in some peculiar office, are called his servants; as *Magistrates*, Rom. 13. 4. *He is the Minister of God for thy good:* And ver. 6. *Gods Ministers attending continually for this thing.* But yet more especially they are called *Ministers and servants*, who sustain the publique offices of the Church; as 2 Tim. 2. 14. *The servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle to all men, apt to teach, patient;* meaning one employed in the publick Ministry. So the Priests of the Old Testament were called the Lords servants, as Psal. 134. 1. *Behold, blest ye the Lord all ye servants of the Lord, which by night stand in the house of the Lord;* He speaketh to the Priests that were to watch in the Temple: and in this sence it is said, Amos 3. 7. *I have sent my servants the Prophets.* But now among these Ministers and Officers of the Church, the *Prophets and Apostles* are stiled so by way of eminency: Yea yet further; Christ, because of his Office of *Mediator*, which is the highest Office, and proper to the Head of the Church, is called Gods Servant; as Isai. 49. 3. *Thou art my Servant:* and Isai. 53. 11. *By his knowledge shall my righteous Servant justify many.* To apply all now to the case in hand; Jude is called a servant of *Jesuu Christ*, not only as one that had given up himself to do his Will as a Christian, but as an Apostle. Let us now observe something hence. a^t See my Exposition on

Observe first, That Jude placeth his service among his Titles: Jam. 1. 1. Observat. 1.
He might have urged other things to render himself honorable to the world, but he doth not stand upon those things, it is enough for him to say, *Jude a servant:* As Jude the Lords Cousin callerh himself his servant; so doth Mary the Lords Mother stile her self his handmaid, Luk. 1. 38. *Behold the handmaid of the Lord:* And the Apostles generally urge it as one of the fairest flowers in their

b1 Pet. 2. 9.
Rev. 1. 6.

garland, the honour of being Christs servants; yea Christ himself counteth it no dishonour to be stiled *Gods servant*: The mean: it offices about Princes are accounted honorable; to be a *Groom* there, is better then to be a *Lord* elsewhere: *Servire Deo regnare est*, it is royal and kingly to be Gods servant; indeed every servant there is a *King*; as *Zeba* and *Zalmunna* said of *Gideons* Brethren, *They each one resembled the children of a King*: so all these are *spiritual Kings*, that live the noblest and freest life in the world. And as we have a *glorious Master*, so consider your fellow-servants; the glorified Saints and we make but one *family*, *Ephes. 3. 15*. And the *Angels* themselves are called *his Ministers*, *Psal. 103. 21*. *Ye Ministers of his that do his pleasure*; they are a part of Gods attendance, and wait upon their Masters person: When we have such fellow-servants, we should not count our work a slavery and baseness; it can be no disparagement to us to be in the same rank and order with the *Angels* and *Saints* departed. Well then, Learn to value the honour that you have by Christs service; as that Emperour counted it a greater privilege to be a *Member of the Church*, then *Head of the Empire*: Look upon *duty* as an honour, and *service* as a *priviledge*; *Honorable alia legis*, *Hos. 8. 12*. so the *Vulgar*: And if ever you be put to your choice, either to enjoy the greatest outward honours, or to serve Christ with disgrace, chuse the latter. *Moses* refused to be called the son of *Pharaohs* daughter when he came to age, *Heb. 11. 24, 25*. *Galeacius Carraciolus* left the honour of his *Marquise* for an obscure life and the Gospel at *Geneva*: *Indignities and dishonours* done you in the way of duty, are honours; *reproaches for Christs sake are treasure*, *Heb. 11. 26*. One of *Pauls* honorary titles is, *Paul a prisoner of Jesus Christ*, *Philem. 1*. and elsewhere he holdeth up his chain in a kind of triumph, *For the hope of Israel am I bound with this Chain*, *Acts 28. 20*. What ever befallerh us in and for our service to Christ, be it never so disgraceful, it is rather a *mark of honour*, then a *brand of shame*.

Observat. 2. Observe again, *His relation to Christ is expressed by service*; as he describeth himself to be *James's Brother*, to *Christs Servant*; by that means he was entitled to Christ: if we would be
* *John 12. 26*. Christs, we must do his Will; our relation ariseth from service: Therefore I shall here take occasion to shew you what it is to be Christs servants. 1. Whoever is Christs servant must resign and

and give up himself wholly to the Will of Christ ; for he that is Christs servant, he is so by *Covenant and Consecration* : We are indeed Christs by all kind of rights and titles, *he made us, and not we our selves* ; no creature is of its self, and therefore it is not its own, but anothers : It is Gods Prerogative alone to love himself, and seek himself, because he alone is without obligation and dependance ; but we owe our selves to him, and therefore cannot without robbery call our selves *our own*. Your *†* tongues are not your own to speak what you please, nor your *†* hearts your own to think what you please, nor your hands your own to do what you please ; by virtue of your Creation you are anothers, and are bound to live and act for another, according to his Will, for his Glory. But this is not all ; By *Redemption* you are Christs ; *Ye are bought with a price*, 1 Cor. 6. 20. as the redeemed are bound to serve him that ransomed them : If a man had bought another out of captivity, or he had sold himself, all his strength or service belonged to the Buyer : Christ hath bought us from the worst slavery, and with the greatest Price ; no thralldom so bad as bondage to Sin and Satan, no Prison so black as Hell, and certainly Christs Blood is better then a little money : So that to live as if we were at our own dispose, is to defraud Christ of his purchase. Thus we are Christs by *Creation and Redemption* ; but not if we would be his servants, we must be his by *voluntary contract*, and *spiritual resignation* : *Yield up your selves*, &c. Rom. 6. 13. Christ loveth to have his right and title established by our *own consent*. We take Christ for Lord and Master, and give up our selves to him, that we may be no longer at our own dispose, and therefore it is not only robbery, but *treachery and breach of Covenant* to seek our selves in any thing. This resignation must be made out of a sense of Christs love to us in his death and sufferings : 2 Cor. 5. 15. *Christ dyed, that they which live should not henceforth live to themselves, but unto him that dyed for them* : We enter upon other services out of *hopes* ; but we enter upon Christs service out of *thankfulness*. Again, This resignation must be *universal*, without reservation of any part : You must have no other Master but God ; Mat. 6. 24. *Ye cannot serve two Masters, ye cannot serve God and Mammon*. Usually men divide themselves between God and the world ; they would give their *Consciences* to Christ, and their
hearts

hearts to Mammon : The Devil pleadeth for a part, for by that means he knoweth that the whole will fall to his share ; therefore all, the *whole man*, in vow, purpose and resolution, must be given up to God. 2. Having given up your selves to Gods service, you must walk as his servants, that is, not as you list, but as the Master pleaseth : The Angels are Gods Ministers, *doing his pleasure*, *Psal. 103. 21.* A servant hath no will of his own, but hath given up his liberty to the directions and commands of another ; therefore if you be Gods servants, you must earnestly desire the knowledge of his Will, and readily comply with it ; you must not do things as they please self and flesh, but as they please God : *David* beggeth for knowledge as Gods servant, *Psal. 119. 125. I am thy servant, grant me understanding, that I may know thy Testimonies.* A faithful servant would not willingly offend his Master, and therefore would fain know what is his will : They plead with God, and search themselves, *Rom. 12. 2.* and all to know his pleasure ; and not only to *know* it, but to *do* it, otherwise *they are worthy of many stripes* by Christs own sentence ; The Masters will should be motive enough, *1 Thes. 4 3. & 5. 13. 1 Pet. 2. 15.* If God will have it so, if Jesus Christ will have it so, it is enough to a faithful servant ; The very signification of Gods Will carryeth with it reason enough to enforce the practise of it. Yea you must equally comply with every Will of God, not only with the easie and pleasant ways of obedience, but such as cross lusts and interests. When two men go together, a man cannot tell whom the servant followeth till they part : When God and our lusts or our interests command contrary things, then you are put to the tryal whether you are Gods servants.

Observat. 3. Again, Observe from the proper acception of the phrase, as it is applyed to those that stand before the Lord in some special Office and Ministration ; as to the *Apostles*, and by consequence to the *Ministers of the Gospel*. The Note is, *That Ministers are servants of Jesus Christ ; Paul a servant, and Jude a servant.* We are to deal between God and the Soul, *Fathers for Heaven*; there is many a good inference may be collected from this Notion, I shall refer all to two heads, the *Ministers Duty* and the *Peoples*. 1. It hinteth Duty to *Ministers*, it teacheth us diligence in our Lords work, for we are Servants, and must give an account,
Heb.

Heb. 13. 17. what good we have done in our places, how we have employed our parts, improved our Interest, for his glory, *Matth. 25. 19.* After a long time the Lord of those servants cometh and reckoneth with them. We are entrusted with the Talent of gifts, with the Talent of office and authority in the Church; now God will see what we have done for his Glory, whether we have beaten our fellow servants, or helped them in the way of salvation; whether our pound hath been hidden in a napkin, or laid out for the gain of souls. Again, it hinteth *faithfulness*; We are not to trade for our selves, and to drive on our own designs of credit and advantage; we are servants, employed for the Masters uses, *Gal. 1. 10.* Do I yet please men? If I pleased men, I should not be the Servant of Christ. A man that sets up for himself, is to trade for himself; but all that a servant doth, should be for his Masters honour and profit. 2. It hinteth *Dutie* to the People; Regard Ministers as Servants of Christ, that you may give their persons all due honour; consider, God hath retained them as for a nearer Service to himself; *1 Cor. 4. 1.* Let a man so account of us as of the Ministers of Christ, and Stewards of the Mysteries of the Gospel. The world counteth the Calling *probrosim artificium*, a sordid artifice and way of living, whereby men set their tongues and parts to sale, and think think that of all Callings this can best be spared; therefore it is high time to assert the dignity of the Office: Men should not think so basely of those who are Christs servants, not only to do his business, but to wait upon his person, his special Attendants; nay * *Embassadours*, that impersonate and represent their Master. Again, Bear our doctrine with meekness and patience; we are but servants; if the message which we bring be displeasing, remember it is the will of our Master; it is not in our power to comply with your lusts and humors, if the Scripture doth not: As God said to *Jeremy, Jer. 15. 19.* Let them return unto thee, but return not thou to them: So you should comply with the Word; we cannot comply with you; The false Prophets returned to the people, complied with their humors: We must deliver our Message, pardon to whom pardon, terror to whom terror is due; servants must be faithful: Thus must you look upon them as servants; yet but as servants, that you may not fondly idolize their persons; What is Paul and Apollos, but Ministers

* 2 Cor. 5. 20.

* Mat. 3.11.
† 1 Cor. 3. 6.

Ministers by whom ye believe? 1 Cor. 3. 5. It is the old way of Flesh and Blood to sacrifice to the next hand: And that you may know to whom to go for the fruit of the Ordinance, when we have done our work, there is * *one that cometh after us who is mightier then we, † who giveth the increase to what we have planted and watered.*

Observat.

3. The Author of the Epistle is described by his kindred and relation [*and Brother of James.*] There were two in the Collage of the Apostles of that name, *James of Zebedee*, and *James the Son of Alphaeus*, who was also called *the brother of the Lord*, that is, his Cousin German, who is the person intended; for *Jude* was his Brother, as *Matth. 13. 55. Is not his Mother called Mary? and his Brethren James and Joses, and Simon, and Judas?* Now this clause is added, partly to distinguish him from the other *Judas* called *Iscaiot*, who betrayed our Lord. *It is good to prevent all visible scandals and exceptions against our persons.* I observe

Observat.

this, because the Scripture doth elsewhere, *Joh. 14. 22. Judas saith unto him, not Iscaiot, How is it that thou wilt manifest thy self to us, and not to the world?* The Scripture would not have you mistake him that said so: Men drink less freely of a suspected Fountain. Partly because this would make the Epistle the more welcome; *James* was of great credit and repute, reckoned by *Paul* among the Pillars, *Gal. 2. 9.* From whence observe, 1. *That it is lawful to use the credit of others for the advantage of the Truth.* In the 15. of the *Acts* the Apostles might have determined the case by their own infallible spirit; but for the greater credit take they take in the consent of others, *veri. 23. The Apostles, and Elders, and Brethren, &c* *Paul* dealing with Heathens, quoteth the sayings of their own Writers in divers places; which may justify the unaffected use of sentences and passages out of the ancient Writers of the Church; It is good to bait the naked hook of Truth sometimes with the advantage of carnal credit. Again observe,

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That we should walk so, that we may be an honour to our relations. This is one of *Judes* titles, *the brother of James*; He took it for an honour to be related to so eminent an Apostle; Worthy men reflect a credit upon their families: To be brother, father, son, to such as have deserved well of the Church, is no mean honour and engagement to virtue. Well then, live so that you may not disgrace your lineage; and you that come of worthy Ancestors,

Ancestors, walk answerably to the dignity of your extraction ; The Images of your Progenitors are not more sullied with dust, and smoak, and age, then they are with your vices : The Spirit of God brands a degenerate Issue for walking unworthy their birth, and the privileges of their blood, 1 Chron. 4. 22, 23. *Vide Junium & alios in locum.* So much for the Saluter.

Let us now come to the Saluted, they are described by their Condition, [called,] by the effects and manifestations of it, which are two, *Sanctification* and *Preservation*.

1. Their Condition, [called,] for that both in the construction of the words, and the order of nature, is to be read first. There is an *outward calling*, and in that sence Christ speaketh, *Mat. 20. 16. Many are called, but few are chosen* ; that is, outwardly called in the invitations of the Word ; so all wicked men that live within the hearing of the Gospel ; but it seemeth they are only called *obiter*, by the by, as they live among the *Elect* ; those are called *κατὰ πρόθεσιν*, according to purpose, *Rom. 8. 28*. But there is an *inward and effectual calling*, by the perswasion of the Spirit, or the voice of the Son of God, which causeth life, *John 5. 25*. The Apostle speaketh here of the called according to Purpose, and that by an inward and effectual calling ; Whence note, *That it is the condition of the people of God to be a called people* ; this is first in their description : see *Rom. 1. 6. Among whom are ye also the called of Jesus Christ* ; So the *Corinthians* are said to be *Saints by calling*, *1 Cor. 1. 2.* and *Heb. 3. 1. Holy Brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling*. Now the Saints are a called people ; First, Because all they have and enjoy is from Gods calling ; a Christian is nothing and hath nothing but what God is pleased to work in him by his creating Word : *Calling the things that are not as though they were*, *Rom. 4. 18*. Now God is pleased to work this way, partly to give us a *Warrant*, that we may possess our privileges in Christ without intrusion and usurpation ; † *No man taketh this honour upon him till he be called of God* ; This is that we have to shew to Conscience, that we do not presume and usurp ; we have a *calling* so to do ; Why dost thou vile wretch go to God in the Name of Christ ? How durst thou that art a sinner look him in the face ? lay hold of Christ ? hope for glory ? Still the *Call* is our *Warrant* and *Title*. If it should be asked of the guests that came in a wedding garment, Friends, how

Observat.

Reason 1

† Heb. 5.

durst ye come hither, and approach the presence-chamber of the King's son? they might answer, *We were bidden to the wedding, Matt. 22.* So in *Matt. 20.* *Why do not you go into the Vineyard?* their answer was, *No man hath hired us;* they had no calling. Partly, to give us encouragement; We need not only leave to come to God by Christ, but also quickening and encouragement, for we are backward; In other preferments there needeth nothing but leave, for there men are forward enough; but here guilt maketh us shie of God, and God is forced to call and hollow after us. By nature we are not only *exiles*, but *fugitives*: Before God banished *Adam*, he first ran away from him, he ran to the Bushes, and then God called him, *Adam where art thou?* *Gen. 3. 9.* How often doth God hollow after us in the Word before we return, and come out of the bushes? He maketh Proclamation, *Isa. 55. 1.* *Ho every one that thirsteth, &c.* We are under spiritual bondage, as the *Israelites* were in *Egypt* under corporal bondage, and God sendeth again and again, and out of very anguish of heart we will not believe him; therefore he calleth and cryeth, *Sinners, where are you? why will you not return unto me?* Gods outward Call is managed by men, and therefore it is very hard to perswade them to discern the voyce of God; as *Samuel* would not be perswaded but that it was *Eli* called him when it was *the Lord*; We think it to be the charity of the Minister, and will not easily acknowledge a call from God, and therefore do not only need leave, but encouragement. Partly because God will work in a way suitable to his own nature and ours; *fortiter & suaviter*, strongly like himself, and sweetly with respect to us; and therefore he doth not only draw, but call; not only put forth the power of his Spirit, but exhort and invice by the Word; the efficacy of divine grace is conveyed this way more suitably to the nature of man: There is grace offered in the Gospel, and the Spirit compelleth to come in. In all the Works of God, there is some word by which his Power is educed and exercised: In the Creation, *Let there be light, &c.* At the Resurrection there is a Trump, and the voyce of an Archangel, *Arise ye dead, and come to judgement:* In all Christs miraculous cures there are some words used, *Be thou clean*, and *Be thou whole*, and *Be thou opened*; and to *Lazarus* in the grave Christ useth words of ministerial excitation, *Lazarus, come forth*: So in converting a sinner

a sinner, there is not only a *secret power*, but a *sweet call* and *invitation*, some word by which this power is conveyed and represented in a way suitable to our capacity. For all these Reasons doth God work grace by calling:

Again, Gods people are well filed a called people, because *Reason 2.* they are so many ways called: from *self* to *Christ*, from *sin* to *holiness*, from *misery* to *happiness* and *glory*. They are called from *self* to *Christ*, *Matt. 11. 28. Come unto me all ye that are heavy laden*: The main end of a call is to bring Christ and the Soul together; every dispensation of God hath a voice, and God speaketh to us by Conscience, by his Works, by benefits, by crosses, but chiefly by *his Word*, the application of which by the Spirit is as it were an *awakening call*; but the chief call of God is by the *voice of the Gospel*, wherein the offers of grace are discovered to us; *Come poor wearied Soul, come to Christ, and thou shalt find ease and comfort.* Again, they are called from *sin* to *holiness*, *1 Thes. 4. 7. God hath not called us to uncleanness, but to holiness*: though the immediate end of divine calling be *Faith*, yet the intermediate end is *holiness*, as the ultimate end is *glory*. Thus we are called out of *Babylon* into *Sion*, from the *Tents of Kedar* into the *Tents of Shem*, from *nature* to *grace*, and the power of *Satan* into the *Kingdom of God*: in short, this call is a separation from uncleanness, and all common and vile uses. Again, they are called from *misery* to *happiness* and *glory*, from *aliens* to be *friends*, from *darkness* to *light*, *2 Pet. 2. 9. from being enemies* to be *reconciled*, from *bastards* to become *sons*, from *vessels of wrath* to be *heirs of Glory*. With respect to all these sorts of calling, it is termed sometimes an *high calling*, *Phil. 3. 14. sometimes an holy calling*, *2 Tim. 1. 9. and sometimes an heavenly calling* *Heb. 3. 1.* It is an *high calling*, because of the *honour* and *dignity* of it; * it is no small matter to be children of God, *co-heirs with Christ*, Kings and Priests to God: Many are lifted up, because they have born Offices, and are called to high places in the world; a Christian hath a calling more excellent, he is called to be a *Saint*, a spiritual King, an holy Priest to God. It is an *holy calling*, because of the effect and purpose of it: Mans calling may put dignity and honour upon us, but it cannot infuse grace; it may *change* our condition, but not our hearts. It is an *heavenly calling*, because of the *Anchor* of it, God by his Spirit; and because of the *aym*

* John 1. 12.
R. m. 8. 17.
Rev. 1. 6.

of it, the grace whereby we are called came from Heaven, and its aym and tendency is to bring us thither: see *1 Thes. 2. 11. 2 Pet. 1. 3. Called us to glory and virtue, &c.* We are first called to Grace, and then to Heaven: first the *sweet voyce* saith, *Come unto me*, and then the *great voyce*, *Come up hither*: from self, sin, and the world we are called off, that we may enjoy God in Christ for evermore. You see the Reasons, let us apply it now.

Use 1.

First, It serveth to press us to hearken to the Lords call: Many are kept off by *vanity and pleasures*, others by their *own fears*: To the first sort I shall only represent the danger of neglecting Gods invitation, and slighting a call, *Prov. 1. 25, 26: Ye have set at nought my counsel, therefore I will laugh at your calamity, and mock when your fear cometh.* Gods wrath is never more terrible, then when it is stirred up to avenge the quarrel of *abused Mercy*. Men cannot endure that two things should be despised, their *anger or kindness*: *Nebuchadnezzar*, when he thought his anger despised, he biddeth them heat the furnace seven times hotter; and *David*, when he thought his kindness despised, threatned to cut off from *Nabal every one that pissed against the wall*. Certainly the Lord taketh it ill when the renewed messages of his love are not regarded; and that is the reason why where mercy is most free, God is most quick and severe upon the refusal of it: The *Lambs wrath* is most terrible, *Psal. 2. 10.* No fire so hot as that which is inkindled by the breath of the despised Gospel. What a terrible threatning is there in the place alledged? *I will laugh at their calamitie*: It is the greatest happiness when the Lord rejoiceth to do us good, and the greatest misery when he rejoiceth to do us evil; Gods laughing will certainly be the creatures mourning. Consider then what an affront you put upon grace, when every vile thing is preferred before it. When the Lord offered *Canaan* to the *Israelites*, and they preferred *Egypt* before it, he swore, * *They should not enter into his rest*: And those that preferred a yoke of *Oxen*, a *Farm*, or *marriage*, before the *Kings feast*, the King protesteth against them, *Luk. 14. 24. None of those that were bidden shall taste of my Supper*: Who ever have glory and grace by Christ, they shall have none.

3 Psal. 95. 11.

For the other sort, that are kept off by their own fears, they are wont to alledge; *It is true, there is mercy in Christ for sinners, but Christ doth not call them*: My Brethren, what do you

look for? an audible voyce to speak to you, Thou *John*, thou *Thomas*, &c. In the renders of the Gospel you are included as well as others, and why will you exclude your selves? If God say, *Sinners*, you should subsume and reply, *I am chief*. I remember it is said, *Joh. 10. 3. Christ calleth his sheep by name, and leadeth them forth*: How doth Christ call them by name? By speaking expressly to their case, as if he did strike them upon the shoulders, and say, *Here is comfort for thee*. As at a feast, when there is a dish that we affect set upon the table, though all the company be free to make use of it, yet we say, *Here is a dish for me*: So should you apply and take to your selves your own portion; though it be propounded generally, yet when God directeth the tongue of his Messengers to speak so expressly to your case, that is all the calling by name which you can look for, since Oracles are ceased, and therefore you should say, *This was a dish provided for my hungry Conscience, intended to me, &c.* But they will reply, *Sure there is no mercy for me, I am so unworthy*: I answer, The invitation taketh no notice of worth, but of thirst, *Rev. 22. 17. Let him that is athirst come, and whosoever will let him take of the water of life freely*: Thou art not worthy, but thou art thirsty, or else whence come these groans? And by the way take notice of the pride that is in legal desolation: men are loth to be beholding to Christ, they would be worthy before they will come to him; and therefore the Apostle useth that expression *ἐξ ὑπερηφανίας*, *Rom. 10. 3. They have not SUBMITTED to the righteousness of God*: A proud creature would faintly establish a righteousness in himself, and is loth to submit to take all from another: As an outward proud man preferreth a russet coat of his own before a silken garment that is borrowed or given him by another. But they are such sinners, &c. *Ans.* The more need to come to Christ; he came to call sinners, *Matt. 9. 13*. It is no matter what thou hast been, but what thou wouldst be; Christ doth not call us *because we are holy*, but *that we may be holy*. Is it a rational plea in outward cases, I am too poor to take Alms? I am too filthy to go to the water to be wash'd? But they have stood out against so many calls already, and scorned Gods counsel. *Ans.* Wisdom calleth scorers, *Prov. 1. 22. Turn ye scorers, how long will ye delight in scorning*? It is a mercy that thou hast one call more, do not increase the guilt that thou complaineest of. But I

know

know not how to come to Christ. Ans. The blind and the lame are invited to the wedding, *Mat. 22.* and Wifdom calleth fools : *Prov. 9. 5. Whofo is fimple, &c.* The stray Lamb is brought home upon the Shepherds foulders, *Luke 15.* Oh that thefe words might be Spirit and life to you.

Ufe 2.

Again, It preffeth us to *make our calling and election fure*, *2 Pet. 1. 10.* that is, to evidence our *election* by our *calling* ; for *calling* is but *election* put in act : *Election* is nothing but Gods love and intention to beftow faving grace upon fuch and fuch perfons ; and *calling* is nothing but the *actual* *manifeftation* of Gods love, or the Application of faving grace, *Rom. 8. 30. Whom he hath predeftinated them he called* : *Calling* is the firft and immediate fruit of *Election*, by which it fpringeth forth, and is exercifed on the *Veffels of mercy* : So *2 Thefs. 2. 13. 14. God hath from the beginning chosen you to falvation, through the fanctification of the Spirit, and the belief of the Truth, to the obtaining of the glory of God, whereunto he hath called you by my Gofpel.* Here is the whole method of *Salvation* ; the firft rife and fpring of mercy was at *Election*, which breaketh out by *effectual calling*, and fo floweth down in the *chanels of faith and holinefs* till it lofe it felf in the *Ocean of everlafting Glory* : So that by *calling* God executeth in time what he decreed before all time ; and he that is called may look backward upon *eternal purpofes of grace*, and forward upon an *eternal poffeffion of Glory*. Well then, if we would get any affurance of Gods favour, or of our intereft in everlafting Glory, the great bufinefs we fhould labour in, is to clear up our *calling* ; it is the freeft and fureft difcovery of Gods love, and fo fitteft to bottom a confidence or affurance : In elective love we have the *beft view* of mercy, and a call is the *firft difcovery and copy* of it ; for it is an *Act of God* which arifeth merely from his choyce, preventing and antecedent not only the *merit*, but the *acts and induftry* of the creature : fee *2 Tim. 1. 9.* Other *Acts of Gods bounty* follow the *Acts of the creature*, but this is the firft motion God maketh to the Soul ; he *accepts* us when we come, but he called us *when we did not think of coming* : In fhort, *Calling*, is the *key of the Gofpel*, the plank that is caft out to fave a finking finner, a fure pledge of Glory, which is therefore called the *high price of our calling*, *Phil. 3. 14.* Once more, here we have the cleareft and moft fenfible experience of the
work

work of grace : After conversion the work may be carried on *tacitely*, and with more silence ; but in calling and conversion (as in all changes) the operations of grace are more sensible ; we may grow insensibly, as a plant doth : The step *from sin to grace*, is a work of greater difficulty and power, then to go on *from grace to grace* ; as the Apostle maketh it a matter of more ease to *save a Saint*, then to *gain a sinner*. *Rom. 5. 8, 9, 10.* and therefore degrees cannot be alike sensible as *change of state*. The Apostle speaking of the first conversion of the *Thessalonians*, he saith, *1 Thes. 1. 9. Ye know what manner of entering we had unto you.* The first approaches of Gods Power and Word to the Soul, as they meet with more opposition, so they cannot but be more sensible, and leave a greater feeling upon us : It were strange if an *Almighty Power* should work in us, and we no way privy or conscious to it, and all done as in our sleep ; to think so, were to give security a soft pillow whereon to rest, and to suffer men to go away with golden dreams, though they feel no change in themselves, pleasing themselves with the supposition of imaginary grace wrought without their privy and knowledge : I would not press too hard upon any tender Conscience ; I do foresee the Objection that may be made, namely, That if Calling giveth such a sensible experience of the work of grace, how cometh it then to pass that so few of Gods children have assurance or any sense of their conversion ? I answer, 1. It is possible Gods Power may work in us, and we not be sensible of it ; there is a difference between our outward and inward senses : we may lose our *spiritual feeling* ; and *inward sense* doth not so clearly discern its object, because of the way in which God conveyeth his Power ; it is *strong*, but *sweet* ; like the influences of the Heavens, of a great efficacy, but scarce discerned : as there was a *great power* wrought in the *Ephesians*, but they did not discern it so sufficiently, *Ephes. 1. 18, 19.* 2. It is the fault of Gods children not to be sensible of the power that worketh in them ; sometimes it is their *carelessness*, some times their *previsiousness*. Their carelessness, in not observing the approaches of God, and how he worketh and breaketh in upon their hearts in the Word ; so that *the time of loves* is not marked when it is present, nor remembered when it is past. As God said of Ephraim, *Hos. 11. 3. When Ephraim was a child, I taught him to go, taking them by the*

arms, but they knew it not, that is, did not observe it : So God communicateth grace to his people, giveth in help and supports, but they observe it not. Sometimes it is *peevishness* and perverseness of judgement; sense of sin, and many weakneses, like a thick cloud, hinder their clear discerning; God hath called them, but they will not own and acknowledge it, and so under-rate their spiritual condition. 3. God doth not call every one in a like violent and sensible manner: some mens conversion is more *gentle* and *silent*; whereas to others Christ cometh like a strong man armed, and snatcheth them out of the fire: some are drawn they know not how, and love by a gentle blast sweetly and softly bloweth open the door; *Ere ever I was aware, &c. Cant. 6.12.* upon others the Spirit cometh like a *mighty rushing wind*, and they are carried to Christ as it were by the gates of Hell. As in the natural birth, some children are brought forth with more ease, others with greater pains and throws: so the new birth in some is without trouble and delay; *God opened the heart of Lydia*, we read of no more, *Acts 16.* but others are brought in with more horror of Conscience, extream sorrow and desperation; God biddeth men *put a difference*, *Jude 22.23.* so doth God himself, 4. This different dispensation God useth according to his own pleasure; no certain Rules can be given: Sometimes they that have had *good education* have *least terrors*, as being restrained from gross sins; sometimes *most terrors*, because they have withstood most means: sometimes they that are call'd to the *greatest services* have most terrors, that they may speak the more evil of sin, because they have felt the bitterness of it; sometimes it is quite otherwise, those that are not called to such eminent service drink most deeply in this cup, and taste the very dregs of sin, and serve onely as monuments of the power of Gods anger; whereas others are spared, and *publick work* serveth in stead of *sorrow* and *trouble of Conscience*. Again sometimes men and women of the *most excellent* and *acute understandings* are most troubled, as having the *clearest apprehensions* of the hainousness of sin, and terribleness of wrath: Again, at other times it cometh from *ignorance*; as fears arise in the dark, and weak spirits are apt to be terrified: sometimes these terrors fall on a *strong body* as best able to bear it, sometimes on a weak, the Devil taking advantage of the weakness of the body to raise disturbances in the mind:

Violent Mutations, from extream to extream, are alwayes more sudden and notable.

mind: Many times in *hot and fiery* natures their changes are sudden, and carried on in an extream way; whereas *soft natures*, whose motions are slower, are gently and by degrees surprized, they take impressions of grace insensibly. Thus you see no certain Rules can be given; only in the general we may observe, That this different dispensation maketh the work of God in calling more or less sensible: those that are brought in by the *violent way* and *roughly*, must needs be sensible of that omnipotent pull, by which their hearts are divorced from their corruptions, and can discourse of the time, the means, and the manner, and all the circumstances of their calling with exactness; as *Paul*, 2 Cor. 12. 2. *I knew a man in Christ fourteen years ago, &c.* Now every one cannot deliver a formal story, nor tell you the exact method and successive operations of grace in conversion. 5. Though there be a *different dispensation* used in calling; yet there is enough to distinguish the *uncalled* from the *called*; Partly because though Gods call be not discerned in the *acts* of it, yet it may be discerned in the *effects* of it: Conversion is evident, if not in *feeling*, yet in *fruit*: Many works of nature are for the convey of them insensible, but the *effects* appear: *Ecc. 1. 5. We know not the way of the spirit, nor how the bones grow in the womb; We know not the manner, point of time, but yet the birth followeth*: They are not Christs that neither know how they are called, nor can give any proof that they are called. The blind man, *Joh. 9.* when they asked him, *How did he come to open thine eyes?* Answered, *How he did it I cannot tell; but this one thing I know, that whereas I was blind, I now see*: Early or late the Soul will give this testimony, *How I got him I cannot tell, but I am glad I find he is here.* Partly because where conversion and calling is carried on more tacitely or silently, there will be something felt and found in them; there is at least an *anxiousness* about their everlasting estate: Every Soul doth not walk in the region of the shadow of death; but every Soul first or last is brought to *What shall I do?* which is usually upon some secret or open sin into which God suffereth them to fall against Conscience: there will be *care*, though not *horror* and *solicitousness*, though not *utter despair*: No Soul ever came to Christ without a load upon his back, though every one be not ready with the *Jaylor* to kill himself for anguish: You will be at a loss sometimes; it is *ease*

securities that goeth on from the *cradle* to the *grave* in the same tenor of hope without variation: There will be a time when you will *smite upon the thigh*, and cry, What shall I do; And as there will be some trouble found in them, so some *change*; all are not converted from *prophaneness* to *Religion*, from some *civility* to *Religion*, from *profession* to *sincerity*, from *servility* to *ingenuity*: Time was when they were careless of communion with God, prayed now and then out of custom, had no delight in the Almighty, but now it is otherwise. Partly because there is a *constant calling*, so that first or last we shall be sensible of the *motions of the Spirit* and the *hearts answer*: to some God speaketh in *thunder*, to others in a *still voice*, but to all he speaketh; therefore did you ever discern Gods calling and your answering? *Psal. 27 8. The Lord said, Seek ye my face; my heart said, Thy face Lord will I seek*: There is no gracious heart but they are often sensible of such a *Dialogue* between God and the Soul; this discourse is constant: he speaketh to us by the *injection of holy motions* and the *actual excitations of his grace*, and we speak to him by *serious promises and resolutions of obedience*: God calleth us into his presence often, and the heart echoeth, *Lo I come*.

The first Evidence of Calling.

Well now, upon all these Considerations labour to get your *calling evidenced*, that will clear up your title to the great privileges of grace; by it you may rebuke your doubts and fears: When Conscience asketh, What have you to do with these comforts? to look upon your selves as objects of Gods Election? as heirs of Glory? you may answer, *I did not take this honour upon me, I was called of God*. But you will say, What are the infallible Notes and Marks of effectual calling? I answer, These; I shall contract larger discourses: You may know your effectual calling, Partly by the *preparations* made for it; though the work it self be done in an instant, and many times when we least think of it, yet usually God maketh way for his mighty Work. As the husbandman harroweth and breaketh the clods before he throweth in the seed: so by some *preparative Conviction* God breaketh the heart, and maketh it meet to receive grace: *Redemption* needed no *Preparation*, but *Conversion* doth. Look as Moses brought them to the *Borders*, but *Joshua* led them into the *Land of Canaan*; so usually there is some foregoing *Law work*, though we are called properly by the *Gospel*, *1. Thes. 2. 14. Called by my Gospel*:

Gospel: The *Law* driveth us out of our selves, but the *Gospel* pulleth in the heart to Christ. Look as in outward generation the matter is gradually prepared and disposed; so is the Soul for the new birth: A man is awakened by the sight of his own wretchedness, convinced of sin, and the evil consequences of it; and then the * work is done by the mild voyce of the Gospel; * Hof. 2. 14. as Manna came down in sweet dew. It is Gods way to speak Gal. 3. 1. terrour before he speak comfort: Christ sheweth the method, *Joh. 16. 8. The Spirit shall convince of sin*: The † word is notable; to convince, is * to shew a thing to be impossible to be otherwise then we represent it: so the Spirit convinceth, and maketh the person yield, and say, *Certainly I am a sinner*, an unbeliever, a very wretch, that hath no interest in Christ: This is Gods method; We come to some certain issue about our being in the state of nature, before we come to some certain issue about our being in the state of grace; The Soul saith, Surely I am stark naught, in a deplored lost condition. Well then, if you had alwayes good thoughts of your selves, or only a slight and general knowledge, that *We are all sinners*, &c. you are not prepared: The blind man, *Joh. 9.* could say, *I was blind*: Were you ever brought to say, *I was a wretch, a miserable forlorn creature out of Christ*? This feedeth presumption and security, because we never bring the debite to an issue concerning our being in either of the states, but content our selves with blind guesses, and loose acknowledgements, that *we are all sinners, and Christ must save us*, &c. This is not enough, there must be a particular and humbling sense of sin: Unworthiness and wretchedness felt, is the first occasion to bring us to Christ: Never a poor Soul that taketh sanctuary at the throne of grace, but he standeth * guilty * Rom. 3. 19. there, and in danger of damnation. Heb. 6. 18.

2. Again, The next Note or occasion of discovery may be taken from the instrument or means by which God hath called us, namely the Word; 2 *Thes. 2. 14. By my Gospel*. Oracles and audible voyces are not his usual course; some Christians talk of such things, but (to say the least of the mistake) they are but the suppositions of an overtroubled fancy; delusions, which God, who bringeth light out of darkness, may at length order for good, and in the wisdom of his Providence make use of them to bring off his people from their discouragements. But usually

† Ελεγχῃ.
* Τὸ μὴ δύνα-
σθαι ἄλλως
ἔχειν ἀλλ'
ὅτως ὡς ἡμεῖς
λέγομεν.
Arist.

* Rom. 3. 19.
Heb. 6. 18.

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nature.

Cant. 5. 6.

Gods way of calling is *by the Word*, and most usually by the *Word preached*, seldom otherwise; for God loveth to own and honour the means of his own appointing with a blessing. I suppose scarce an instance can be given of any converted by *reading or meditation*, that neglecteth *prophecy* where it was to be had. I confess the Word may not work alwayes in time of hearing: There is a notable instance, — *My Soul failed when he spake*; or rather it may be rendered, *because of his speech*: Now compare it with the time of Christs visit, verse 2, 3. *Open my Sister, my Dove, &c.* while Christ was speaking she is careless and sluggish, *I have put off my coat, how shall I put it on?* you see her heart was far from failing then; but when she remembered it afterward, then her bowels were troubled: as *Peter* also was wrought upon by the remembrance of Christs words a great while after they were spoken, *Mat. 26.* last vers^e. Thus many times God reviveth old truths, and maketh them effectual long after the time of delivery: The Word worketh then either in the *hearing*, or in the *remembrance*, or *deep meditation* upon it. Well now, Can you remember such an experience, when God called you by his Word, and *spake comfortably to your hearts*? Did he ever move you to go aside into the *Closet*, that you might be solitary and serious, and consider of your condition? usually at our first call we are moved to go aside, that God and we may confer in private; *Hosea 2. 14.* *God calleth into the wilderness, that he may speak to the heart*: and *Ezekiel* was called into the field, that God might more freely talk with him, *Ezek. 3. 22.* *Arise, go forth into the plain, that there I may talk with thee*: So *Cant. 7. 11.* *Come my Beloved, let us go forth into the fields, &c.* Usually his first motions are to go aside and consider; Christ is *bashful* before acquaintance, and doth not speak to us in company, but in private: Did he ever thus invite you into secret places? did he ever call thee *by name*, speak so expressly to thy case, as if he had said, Here is mercy for thee, comfort for thee, here is thy portion? First or last Gods children have such experiences: There

• *Ezek. 16. 67.* is a * *time of loves* which they cannot forget; at least a time time wherein the *Master of the Assemblies* fastned a nail in their hearts. Gods peop^e are wont to talk how *seasonably*, and yet how *strangely* Providence casts them upon such opportunities; as *David, Psal. 119. 93.* *I shall never forget thy Precepts, for by them*

them thou hast quickened me : Oh I shall never forget such an Ordinance, such a Sermon, wherein the Lord was pleased to take notice of me, and to speak to my heart : Weak Impressions are soon razed out, but powerful effects of the Word leave a durable mark and character that cannot be defaced.

3. The next Mark may be taken from the *formal answer*, or *correspondent act* of the Creature to the call of God, for that is it which sealeth our Election; for otherwise *many be called, but they are not chosen*, unless the heart be prevailed with to obey the call : Yea the notion of *Vocation* in its full latitude, implieth not only *Gods Act*, but ours, our *Answer* to his call. *Christs sheep hear his voice* : * When Christ saith, *Mary, she answereth*, * John 10. 16. *Rabboni, my Lord*. Gods call is the offer of grace, our answer is the accepting of grace offered; there must be receiving, as we 1 is offering : *Vocation* is not effectual unless it end in Union; it is receiving that giveth us interest; Job. 1. 12. The Scriptures do everywhere imply and signifie this answerable act of the creature to the call of God : God saith, *Seek ye my face*, and the soul like a quick eccho, *Thy face Lord will I seek*, Psal. 27. 8. So Jer. 3. 22. *Return ye back-sliding children, and I will heal you*; and then, *Behold we come unto thee, for thou art the Lord our God*. The Soul is enabled to do that which it is exhorted to do : God saith, *Come to Christ*, and the Soul saith, *Lord I come*. Well then, is the call obeyed? do you receive Christ for your Lord and Saviour? The proper answer of the call is the consent and full purpose of the heart to take Christ; for offering is the call, and receiving is the answer : Have you subscribed and consented to take Christ upon his own terms? as the Prophet, when he was to take a wife, maketh an offer, *Hosea 3. I will be for thee, and thou shalt be for me*; Are you content? Christ will be for you in all his graces, merits, benefits, if you will be for him in all your motions, tendencies, aims : Alas, your hearts know that you are for your selves, lusts, interests, &c.

4. Again, You may know your calling by the *concomitant dispositions* of the Soul that go along with such a return and answer : Where ever Christ is received, he is received with worthy and suitable affections; these are most notable. 1. *Godly sorrow*, Jer. 31. 9. *They shall come with weeping and supplication, and I will lead them* : It is spoken of the Jews conversion; when

when God cometh to lead them, they shall bewail their hardness of heart and unbelief: Such kind of workings there are in the heart of every returning sinner; as, *that God should look upon such a worthless creature as I am, that have all this while gained, and stood out many an invitation! that ever God should care for such a vile and stubborn wretch! seek to reclaim such a wayward heart!* Usually there are such mournful and self-humbling reflections, that get the start of faith and comfort, and do more sensibly bewray themselves: Never did any child of God get home to him, but *smiting on the thigh, Jer. 31. 18.* and complaining of themselves before they could take comfort in God.

2. *Holy wonder*, which ariseth from comparing their own wretchedness with Gods rich mercy in Christ; and therefore the Apostle saith, *1 Pet. 2. 9. Who hath called us out of darkness into his marvellous light;* implying that Gods grace is most wonderful at first conversion, as light is to a man that cometh out of a dungeon; *woful darkness* maketh it *marvellous light*: In this change there is nothing but what is wonderful; both the *sweetness* and the *power* of that grace by which it is wrought: *The sweetness* of grace; when God came to offer *Abraham* the grace of the Covenant, *he fell upon his face, Gen. 17. 3.* in an humble adoration and reverence. *The power of Grace*; If *Peter* wondered at his deliverance by the Angel out of that strong Prison, we have much more cause to wonder that the yoke is broken, and that we are set free by Christ: the sweet effects of this grace cause wonder; *The peace of God which passeth all understanding, &c.*

3. *A free resolution and confidence*; come what ever cometh, they will obey God. As *Abraham* being called obeyed God, *not knowing whither he went. Heb. 11. 8.* So when they have a warrant, they will make adventures of faith, though they know not the success; as *Peter* would cast out the net at Christs command, though there were little likelihood of taking fish; *Howbeit at thy command, &c. Luke 5. 5.* So it is unlikely God will receive me to grace, yet I will adventure, I know not what will come of it: Where Faith is sensible of a Command, it doth not dispute a duty, but accomplish it: The Spirit speaketh to the Soul, as the Disciples did to the blind man, *Mark 10. 49. Be of good comfort, rise, because the Master calleth thee.* I instance in these dispositions, because they are most sensible:

5. It may be evidenced by the fruits and effects of a call ; the call inferreth a change of the former estate, both in *heart* and *life*.

1. There will be a change in the *whole heart* : In the *mind* and *judgement*, there the activitie of the new nature is first discovered ; *Ephes. 4. 23. Renewed in the spirit of the mind* ; in that which is most intimate and excellent there : In our discourse and reason, all the discourses, debates, purposes and cares of the Soul will be to please God : The mind is made a *forge* for holy uses, wherein to debate and contrive how to carry on the work of grace, how to glorifie God in our relations, concernments ; certainly this will be found in all those that are called and converted. So in the *will* and *affections* there will be a constant inclination towards God, as the chiefest good : *Psal. 119. 57. Thou art my portion O Lord, I have said that I will keep thy words* : The Soul is resolved ; there is a *Decree* issued forth in that behalf, to dedicate it self to God and his Will : This is the great difference between men and men, in fixing their *chiefest good* and *utmost end* ; The Soul finding comfort in God, setteth the whole bent of her endeavours towards him. So for the other affections, which attend upon the other Act of the Will, *aversion* and *loathing* : a Soul that is called and converted hateth sin, its own beloved sin, as the greatest evil : *Hose. 14. 8. What have I any more to do with Idols ? Isai. 30. 22. Thou shalt say to it as to an abominable rag, Get thee hence. A keen displacency and hearty indignation* is kindled in the Soul against sin : when God changeth a Soul, he putterh a disposition into it somewhat like his own nature ; God cannot abide sin, and a sanctified heart cannot abide it, *Get thou hence, &c.* the new life hath an *antipathy* to that which is contrary to it.

2. In the *life* there will be a change ; men will walk worthy their calling, not disgracing it by scandals, or unseemly practices : *Eph. 4. 1. I beseech you Brethren walk worthy of the Vocation wherewith ye are called* ; that is, suitable to the *purity*, suitable to the *dignity* of it. When *David* was a Shepherd, he thought of nothing else but keeping his fathers sheep, but when God called him to be a Shepherd of the people, then he had other projects, and was of other manner of behaviour : *A new calling* requirerh a *new conversation*, So *1 Thes. 2. 12. Walk worthy of God,*
who

God. who hath called you to his Kingdom and his Glory : The divine calling puts an honour upon you : It is not for *Princes to embrace the dunghil*, nor for Eagles to catch flies; to be vain, voluptuous, carnal and worldly, as others are : you are called to the fellowship of Saints and Angels, will it become one of your hopes to drive on such a low design as a *worldly interest* ? If you saw a man labouring in filthy ditches, and soiling himself, as poor men do, would you believe that he were heir apparent to a Crown, called to inherit a Kingdome ? Who will believe your calling, when you stick in the mud of pleasures, and are carried on with such a zealous respect after secular interests ? The Apostle reproveth the *Corinthians for walking as men*, 1 *Cor.* 3. 3. Some walk *as beasts*, others are of a more civil strain ; but this is but *as men* ; you should walk more sublimely, above the ordinary rate of flesh and blood. When *Antigonus* was going into the house of an harlot, on told him, *Thou art a Kings son*. Oh remember your dignity, and walk worthy of your high calling ; walk as having the world under your feet, with an holy scorn and contempt of sublunary enjoyments : And as you should walk worthy of the dignity of your calling, so of the purity of it ; *He that hath called you is holy*, 1 *Pet.* 1. 15. and your condition is an *holy calling*, 2 *Tim.* 1. 2. and the end of your calling is holiness, 2 *Thes.* 4. 7. *God hath called us unto holiness* : all which are so many engagements to urge us to the more care. A filthy loose conversation will never suit with this calling ; you are a shame and a stain to him that calleth you, if you walk thus : as some in the Prophet are said to * *pollute God*, namely, as their pollutions were retorted upon God.

* Ezck. 36.

Let us now come to the Manifestations and Effects of this Calling, and the first Effect mentioned is Sanctification, [*Sanctified in God the Father* :] Where you may note two things. 1. The State, [*Sanctified*.] 2. The Author of it, [*By God the Father*.]

First, The State *ἡγιασμένοις*, to them which are sanctified ; in stead of which some Copies have, *ἡγαπημένοις*, beloved by God the Father : but let us keep to our own reading, the other being a mistake, and in few Greek Copies. The Note is, *That Gods people, whom he hath called out of the world to himself, are a sanctified*

Observat.

fiſed people. I ſhall ſhew you, 1. What it is to be ſanctified: and then, 2. Why Gods called people muſt be ſanctified.

Fiſt, What it is to be ſanctified; there are many acceptions of the term; the moſt famous are two; to ſanctifie is either *to ſet apart*, or *to cleanſe*; theſe two notions will be enough for our purpoſe, if in each of them we ſuppoſe both ſomthing *privative*, and ſomthing *poſitive*: as when it ſignifieth *to ſet apart*, you muſt conceive not only a ſetting apart from common uſe, but a *Dedication to holy uſes*, or a ſetting apart for God, which is the moſt proper acception of the word: So when it ſignifieth *to cleanſe*, you muſt not onely conceive a *Purgation* from filthineſs, but a *Plantation* of ſeeds of Grace; not only an *Absolution* of natural corruption, but an *Renovation* of Gods Image. In this method, let us a little conſider the thing in hand.

1: To ſanctifie, is to *ſet apart*, and *dedicate*: Now Gods people are *ſet apart* * by God, and they *dedicate* themſelves to his uſe and ſervice. They are ſet apart by God both *in time* and *before time*: Before all time they are ſet apart by Gods Decree to be an *Holy Seed* to himſelf in and by Chriſt, ſeparated from the perishing world to be *vessels of honour*; as the Reprobate are called *vessels of wrath and diſhonour*: thus we are ſaid to be *choſen to be holy*, Ephes. 1.4. But then *in time* they are *regenerated*, and actually ſet apart: Sanctification is an *actual Election* (as before) by which we are ſet apart from the perishing world to act for God, and to ſeek the things that make for his glory: Thus we are called Gods *fiſt fruits*, which were the Lords portion, James 1.11. and is there made a fruit of Regeneration: And thus we are ſaid to be an *holy Priesthood*, 1 Pet. 2. 9. the Priests being men ſet apart to minifter in Gods preſence: Now this *Conſecration* inferreth an holy preciſeneſſe and ſingularity in the godly, that they may *keep themſelves unſpotted from the world*. James 1.28. * as holy things were to be kept from a common uſe; and it implieth that every ſin is a kind of *ſacrilege*, it ſteal- eth an holy thing from God. But over and above all this, they *dedicate themſelves* or ſet apart themſelves by the conſent of their own vows; Rom. 12.1. *Preſent yourſelves, &c*: as every man was to bring his own ſacrifice; and for this dedication the Lord calleth, when he ſaith, *My ſon give me thy heart*; becauſe God loveth to put the honour upon us of a gift; when it is but

* Pſal. 1.4.
2 Tim. 2. 21.
Veſſels of honor for the Maſters uſe.

* It was a phariſation in Baſhazgar to drink in the G ps of the Temple.

a debt; and because our voluntary consent to this surrender is a necessary fruit of grace, and the immediate effect of his own choyce.

2. To sanctifie, is to *cleanse*, together with its positive act to *renew* and *adorn* with grace.

Let us first speak of the *privative* or *cleansing* work; this notion is necessary to be added to the former: They that are *sanctified* must not only be *separated* to an holy use, but must also be *cleansed*: as to *sanctifie* signifieth to *separate*, so there is a difference between *them* and *others*; and as it signifieth to *cleanse*, so there is a difference between *them* and *themselves*. They differ from others, because they are a people set apart to act and live for God: they trade for God, eat for God, drink for God, more

* 1 Cor. 10. 34

or less, all is for * Gods glory, and so are a distinct company from the men of the world, who are merely swayed by their own interests, a company that merely act for themselves in all that they do. And then there is a difference between *them* and *themselves*, for Sanctification is the cleansing of a thing that was once filthy: 1 Cor. 6. 11. *Such were some of you, but now ye are washed, but now ye are sanctified in the Name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God*: they are not the same men they were before. We all come into the world polluted with the stain of sin, which is purged and done away by degrees, and at death wholly, and never before: When Christ cometh to bring us to God as the fruits of his Purchase, then we are *without spot and blemish*, Ephes. 5. 26. The Papists cavil, yea trifle; when they argue from that place, that either we must grant a *perfection* in this life, or a *purgation* after death, or how else cometh the soul to be without *spot and blemish*? I answer, That place asserts *the thing* to the comfort of the Elect, that once they shall get rid of the filthy spots of sin; but for *the time*, most probably in the *moment of expiring*: As the Soul in the very moment wherein it is joynted to the body becometh sinful; so in the moment wherein it leaveth the body 'tis *sanctified*, and presented by Christ to God; as many pious Souls breathe out their last with the profession of this hope: Then we shall be *cleansed* indeed; now the work is *in fieri*, 'tis a doing: The work of grace for the present consists in rubbing away the *old filth*, and * weakening original corruption more and more; as also in washing off the

* So obstinate is mans heart, that that is all that can be done; the weakening of sin, but not the destruction of it

new defilement which we contract every day by conversing in the world: See *John 13. 10.* where our Saviour alludeth to a man that hath been bathing himself, but after his return by treading on the ground again stains his feet, and needeth another washing of his feet at least: So by conversing in the world, there are stains and spots contracted, which must alwayes be washed off by *daily repentance*, besides our * *general bathing* at first conversion * *Tit. 3. 5.* or regeneration. I have no more to say to this *cleansing work*, but only this; That it is not meerly like *the washing off of spots*, but like the *purging of sick matter* or ill humours out of the body; it is a work done with much reluctance of corrupt nature, and therefore it is expressed by *subduing our iniquities*, *Mich. 7. 19.* In outward filthiness there is no *actual resistance*, as there is in sin.

But to speak now of the positive work, or the *decking and adorning* the Soul with grace. As the Priests under the Law, when they came to minister before the Lord, were not onely *washed in the great Laver*, but adorned with *gorgeous apparel*: So to be *sanctified*, is more then to be purified; for besides the *expulsion of sin*, there is an *infusion of grace*, a disposition wrought clean contrary to what we had before, therefore called a *new heart* and a *new spirit*, see *Ezek. 36. 25, 26, 27.* from whence also there floweth *newness of life and conversation*; there is a *new heart* or conformity to *Gods Nature*, and a *new life*, or conformity to *Gods Will*; The pattern of that Sanctification which is wrought in the heart, is *Gods Nature or Image*, *2 Pet. 1. 4.* *Ephes. 4. 24.* and the pattern of that Sanctification which is wrought in the life, is *Gods Law* or revealed Will, *1 Thes. 4. 3.* the one is our *habitual holyness*, and the other our *actual*.

1. For *habitual Sanctification*, or that which is wrought in the heart, I observe, that it is * *through*, but not *full*; there must * As a child is be all grace, and every faculty must be adorned with grace: *true man*, *1 Thes. 5. 23.* *The very God of Peace sanctifie you wholly: I pray though not perfect man, as God your whole spirit, soul and body be preserved blameless until the coming of Jesus Christ.* All of man is made up of *spirit*, *body*, and *soul*; that is the *Theological distinction* of the faculties. *all the parts*, the *spirit* that is the more rational and Angelical part of the soul, though not the *Understanding*, *Conscience*, *Will*: and then there is the *Soul*, the *growth*, and *strength*, and *lower part*, the more brutish and sensual affections and desires: *stature*.

* All was de-
praved by A-
dam, and all is
renewed by
Christ.

and then *Body*, the outward man, the instrument of the soul, which needeth to be *sanctified*, that is, kept in a good order and frame, that it may not rebel, or disobey the motions of the better part. You see * then every faculty must be seasoned with the new nature; this leaven must get into the whole lump; the minde, memory, conscience, will, desires, delights, all must be brought into conformity to the Image of God. And as every faculty must be sanctified, so there must be *every grace*: In Conversion there is introduced into the Soul a *stock of truth*, and a *frame of grace*, called in other terms the *anointing*, 1 John 2. 27: and the *seed of God*, 1 Joh. 3. 19. There is a *stock of truth* brought into the understanding to season that; not that every one that is regenerate doth actually know all truths, but there is a *saving light* and knowledge of things necessary; they see enough to avoyd courses of damnation, and to cleave to the wayes of God; and there is an *inquisitiveness* after truths, and a *suitableness* to them when they are revealed; they are *teachable*, though *actually ignorant*; there is some thing in their hearts that carrieth a *cognition* and proportion to every truth, and claimeth kin of it when ever it is revealed. And then there is a *frame of grace*; for the *mind* is not only *inlightned*, but the *will* and *affections* are *sanctified*, and the *heart inclined* to chooise the wayes of God, and to obey him when ever occasion is offered. The habits of all grace are brought into the heart by *Regeneration* as *original sin* containeth the seeds and habits of all sin: though there be not explicite workings of all graces at that time, yet they are introduced, and make up one *sincere bent* of the Soul towards God, called *holiness in truth*, Eph. 4. 24. Thus you see the new Creature doth not come out maimed, the *person sanctified* hath all the parts of a new man, not one member is wanting. But no though this *Sanctification* be *through*, yet it is not *full* and *complete* for degrees; every part is sanctified, but every part is not *wholly sanctified*: In the most gracious there is a double principle, *Hell and Heaven*, *Adam and Jesu*, the *Flesh* and the *Spirit*, the *Law of the Members*, and the *Law of the Mind*: such a medley and composition are we during the present state! We *know but in part*, and we are sanctified but in part; and thus being such a mixture in the *Principles* of Operation, every action is mixt: It is notable, that there is no commendable act in
Scripture

Scripture recorded, but there is some mixture of corruption in it, even in the most Heroical exercises and discoveries of Faith: *Moses* beleeveth, and therefore smiteth the rock, but he *smiteth twice*; *Sarah* beleeveth the promise, but giveth her maid to *Abraham*; *Rebecca* was told that *the elder should serve the younger*, and beleeveth it, but yet she sets *Jacob* a work to get the blessing by a wile; *Rahab* saveth the Spies, but maketh a lye, &c. Thus is our wine mingled with water, our honey with wax, and our silver with tin! All the trial is, that the *better part* prevail- Can. 5. 20
eth; and that we are *still growing* and *hasting* on to perfection, as the morning Sun doth to high noon, *Provs* 4. 18.

2. For *actual Sanctification*, which standeth in a conformity to Gods Will, when the heart is changed so, as the *Life, Thoughts, Words, Actions*, all are sanctified: there is a spirit of holyness working within, and breathing without, in sanctified discourse and holy exercises, all the actions savour of grace. Now our actions are sanctified and savour of grace, when they are performed upon *new Principles* and *new Ends*.

1. *New Principles*; *Duty* swayeth the conscience, and love inclineth the heart: *1 Tim.* 1. 5. *The end of the Commandment is Charity out of a pure heart, and good conscience, and faith unfeigned*: No Act is gracious, and an Act of pure obedience, unless it have these qualifications. It is not the *matter* that maketh the work good, but the *principles*: all that we do must come from a principle of *Faith, Love, and Obedience*, Obedience respects the *Command, Love* the *kindness* and *merit* of the Law-giver, and *Faith* his bounty and reward: The first swayeth the Conscience, the second inclineth the heart, and the third giveth encouragement: This is to do duties with a Gospel frame of spirit: Obedience takes notice of the *Laws* of God, love of the *kindness* of God, and faith of the *Rewards* of God; and so obedience sheweth us the *matter* of the duty, and with the *encouragement*: so that what ever is done is an Act of the new nature or sanctified estate, it is an Act of Obedience out of *gratitude*, upon the encouragement of our *glorious hopes and advantages* in His Will is Christ: As if it be asked, Why do I do it? * God hath commanded it: Why with such strength of affection and earnestness? God will have † God hath deserved it, because of his love and bounty in Christ: * 1 Thes. 4. 3.
and 5. 18.
† 2 Cor. 5.
14. 15.
Conscience is sensible of the Obligation, and love and hope sweet-

Titus 2. 11, 12,
13, 14.

ent the duty. There is a *natural Conscience* of good and evil, which is known by *legal axioms* and *carnal motives*: what is done out of *natural conscience*, is not done out of *obedience* and *thankfulness*, but out of *bondage*, and with a *servile frame* of spirit; like fruits that are ripened by art and force, not naturally nor kindly.

2. *New Ends*: Here indeed the discovery is most sensible; *Principles* are more hidden, and discovered mostly by *Ends*; Now the only end must be *Gods glory*: All that is done in the spiritual life, be it an Act of Piety, Justice, Temperance or Charity, it must be done with this aim, that God may be glorified by our obedience to his Will; I owe this duty to God, and I must do it for Gods sake; be it a duty of worship, or in your civil relation and traffique; as if I pray, the last end of Prayer must be Gods glory, whether I seek grace and pardon, or the conveniences and supports of the present life: Grace still sublimareth the intention of the creature, therefore carnal men are taxed for praying out of self-interests; *Hosea 7. 14. They have not cried unto me when they howled upon their beds; they assemble themselves for corn, and wine, and oyle*: It is but a *bruiſh-ery*, when men seek only their own commodity and welfare; as beasts will *howl* when they are sensible of any smart and injury; dogs or any brute beasts may do the same, there is no act of grace in it. So in charity, many men make it a kind of bargain and traffique, they do it to be seen of men, *Mat. 6. 2.* to gratifie their worldly interests, not to please God, or honour God; for their credit and repute, to be well thought of; and there therefore Christ saith *μὴ δὲν εὐλοῖν ἀνθρώποις*, that is, they have that which they look for; for other things they give God a *discharge* and *acquittance*. Briefly, the aims of men not regenerate or sanctified, are either *Carnal*, or *Natural*, or *Legal*. 1. *Carnal*, when men make a market of Religion, their worship, righteousness and charity is to *set to sale*, and by a vile submission made to stoop to their own private interests; as the Pharisees *made long prayers to devour widows houses*, that is, to beget a fame and repute of honesty, that they might be entrusted with the management of their Estates: So some may pray to *shew parts*, preach out of *envy*, and to rival others in esteem, *Phil. 1. 15.* Often is this vile scorn put upon God, that his worship is made a cover and pretence to
unclean

unclean intents ; which is as if a cup of gold made for a King to drink of, should be filled with excrements ; or as if we did set up another god beside him ; for that which we make our *utmost end*, we make it our God : as false Teachers are said to *make their belly their God*, Phil. 3. 19. because all that they did was for belly cheer, to flow in abundance of wealth and worldly pleasures, by this means setting up the belly, and the concernments of the belly in Gods stead. 2. There are *Natural ends* : It is grace (as I said) that sublimateth the intention of the creature : A carnal man can go no higher then Self ; as water cannot ascend beyond its spring : Now all natural men are not hypocrites, to put on a pretence of strictness out of design : the Apostle saith, *They do by nature the things contained in the Law*, Rom. 2. 14. that is, upon the impulses of natural conscience, they avoid such sins as Nature discovereth, upon such arguments and reasons as Nature suggesteth : If they worship, it is to satisfy their own Consciences ; if they be strict and temperate, it is not out of reasons of obedience, but because the matter of carnal pleasure is gross and burdensome, and hindereth the free contemplation of the mind ; or because these pleasures emasculate and quench their natural bravery, and so hinder their reputation in the world : if they be just, it is to maintain commerce between man and man ; if they be kind in their relations, it is for their own peace and quiet ; nothing is done *as in and to the Lord*, as the Apostle enjoineth, *Ephes. 5* : God is neither at the beginning, nor at the end of any of these actions ; the *love of God* is not their *spring and rise*, nor the *glory of God* their aim : If they pray, there is no intention beyond Self, and the welfare of their own natures ; the matter is but the * *outward work* of * *Εργον νόμου* the Law, and their aim is but the freedom and welfare of nature. 3. There are *legal ends* : When wicked men are most devout, is it but to quiet conscience, to satisfy God for their sins by their duties ; they would fain buy out their peace with Heaven at any rate : *Micah. 6. 6, 7, 8. Wherein shall I come before him ? what shall I give for the sins of my Soul ?* They are devout, charitable, that by diligence in worship, and exceeding in charity, they may expiate the offences of a carnal life : If peace of conscience were to be purchased with money, they would not spare ; they would rather part with any thing then their corruptions,

ruptions, because nothing is so dear to a carnal heart as sin. So that you see devout nature is very corrupt and perverse, and therefore all its actions are justly hated of God, *Prov. 21. 27. The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination, how much more when he offereth it with an evil mind?* that is, to buy an indulgence in other sins, that he may sin them freely and with leave from Heaven: In short, all their duties of worship and charity are performed as a *sin-offering*, and not as a *thank-offering*; to satisfy God, not to glorify him; usually they are exorted from him in a pang of conscience; as a Mariner casts out his goods in a storm, or a traveller yieldeth his money when beset with thieves; there is no true delight in God or in obedience. And thus I have shewed you what it is to be sanctified in heart and life, which was the first thing propounded.

Secondly, Let me now shew why Gods called people must be sanctified, and that briefly and in few words.

1. For the honour of God, of every Person in the Trinity, *Father, Son, and Spirit*. For the honour of the Father, that his choice may not be disparaged: *Ephes. 1. 4. He hath elected us to be holy.* * There is some conscience in the world, that maketh them adore strictness: meer *holiness* hath some majesty with it in the eye of Nature, but especially *Gospel holiness*; whereas looseness is looked upon with scorn and contempt; so that his *chosen people* would be a dishonour to him if they were not sanctified: therefore God the Father aimeth at it in all his dispensations; he chooseth us, that we may be of a *choice spirit*: as when *Esther* was chosen out among the Virgins, she was purified and decked with ornaments, and had garments given her out of the Kings Wardrobe; so we are made holy being chosen of God. And then he calleth us, that he may put this honour upon us in the eye of the world, to make us like himself; *Be ye holy, as he that hath called us is holy, 1 Pet. 1. 15.* It were monstrous that God should set his affections upon a people altogether * unlike him; that he should call them to be so near himself, that continue corrupt and carnal: It is the aim of his Providences as well as his special grace; we are afflicted, that we may be *partakers of his holiness, Heb. 12. 10.* threshed, that our husk may fly off: God certainly delighteth not in the afflictions of his people; no, * *he loveth the prosperity of the Saints*, but he bid rather

* 2 Thel. 2. 14. *Chosen to the sanctification of the Spirit.*

* *Et demum vera est religio imitari quem colis. Lactant.*

* *Psal. 35. 27.*

rather see them in any condition then see them sinful. Again, It is for the honour of God the Son, whose members we are; Head and members must be all of a piece, like one another: It were monstrous that Christ should have such a body as *Nebuchadnezzar* saw in his dream, where the head was of pure gold, and the thighs brass, and the feet iron, &c. and it were an odde sight, that a face of *Europe* should be put upon the body of a *Negro* or *Ethiopian*; and as strange and odde it is, that Christ should have a disproportioned body quite unlike himself; yea it is little for his honour that he should be the head of an *ulcerous body*, as well as a monstrous body: so much of sin as you continue, so much you disparage your Redeemer, and put him to shame: therefore all Christs aim is to make us holy; for that and he redeemed us, that he might sanctifie us, and make us a glorious Church without spot and wrinkle, *Ephes. 5. 26, 27.* When Christ was upon the Cross, in the height of his love, he was devising what he should do for his Church to make her honourable and glorious, and he pitched upon sanctification as the fittest blessing that he could bestow upon us: Every distinct Society must have some distinct honour and priviledge; Now Christ had set apart the Church as a distinct Society to himself, and therefore he would not bestow upon her pomp and worldly greatness, other Societies had enough of that, but holiness, grace, which is our splendor and ornament: And indeed this was a far better gift † Psa 92. 5. then any outward greatness and excellency could be; for moral Holiness excellencies are far better then civil and natural: It is Gods own honour to be holy, therefore it is said, that he is glorious in holiness, *Exod. 15. 11.* He is elsewhere said to be rich in mercy, but here glorious in holiness; his treasure is his goodness, but that which he accounts his honour is his holiness or immaculate purity; as you know among men their wealth is distinguished from their honour. But in this gift Christ had not only respect to the excellency of it, but to our need and want; Christ was then repairing and making up the ruines of the Fall; now we lost in *Adam* the purity of our natures, as well as the favour of God; therefore that the plaister might be as broad as the sore, he would not only reconcile us to God, but sanctifie us; his Blood was not only *λύτρον*, a Price, but *λάτρον*, a Laver, wherein to wash us and make us clean: as under the Law there was in the

Tabernacle a great *Labor* as we I as an *Altar*, to shew we must be *washed* and *sanctified* as well as *reconciled* to God: and Christ came not only to abolish the *guilt of sin*, which is against *our interest*, our peace and comfort but also to destroy the *power of sin*, which is against *Gods glory*. And as this was Christs aim in Redemption, so also in the Gospel, and the precious Promises of it; he died that Ordinances might be under a blessing, and conduce to the promotion of holiness; for so it is there in *Ephes. 5. 26. That he might sanctifie us by the washing of water through the Word*: There is a treasure of grace purchased, and left in the Church to be conveyed to us by the use of these Ordinances. So *John 17. 19. I sanctifie my self for their sakes, that they may be sanctified through the truth*. When ever we come to the Word, or enjoy the use of the Seals, we may expect to reap the fruits of Christs Purchase. *Celsus* objected against Christianity, that it was a *sanctuary for Villains, and men of a licentious life*: *Origen* answered him, that it was not a *Sanctuary* to nourish them in their evil practices, but an *Hospital* to cure them. As under the Law all the *Cities of Refuge* were *Cities of Levites, and Schools of Instruction*: so Christ hath made the Church a *School*, wherein to learn the trade of Holiness; and the Word, and the Seals, and all the Ordinances look that way. Lastly, It is for the honour of *God the Spirit*, that the *called people* should be *holy*, because they are *his charge*, in pupillage to the Holy Ghost, for this end and reason, that they may be sanctified; *Sanctification* is made his personal operation; *The sanctification of the Spirit. 2 Thes. 2. 14. and 1 Pet. 1. 2.* He is to shape and fashion all the vessels of glory, to deck the Spouse of Christ with the Jewels of the Covenant. This is the great advantage that we have in the Oeconomy and dispensation of grace, that we have God to *purpose* it, God to *purchase* it, and God to *work* it; the Father, Word and Spirit, who agree in one, to sanctifie the creature, and make it holy. Now it is a great grief to the Spirit when the work doth not go on and prosper in the Soul; for *he worketh us to this very thing*, and is therefore called the *Spirit of holiness*: it is not for his honour to dwell in *defiled Temples*, and to let the *called people* go naked, and without their ornament. Well then, you see God for his honours sake will have his *purposes* accomplished for which he chose us,

and

and Christ his purchase made good, and the Spirit who is left in charge to see all accomplished, he goeth on with the work.

2. Another Reason why we must be sanctified, is, because of the hopes to which we are called, and the happiness which we expect: now we cannot have it unless we be holy: *Heb. 12. 14. Without holiness no man shall see God*: We are bidden in that verse to follow peace, but chiefly holiness; * for it is not said, that *without Peace no man shall see God*: Peace may be often broken in the quarrel of truth and holiness, and so Gods children may be passively men of contention; aye but for all that they shall see God: but those that are not holy he cannot endure their presence, and therefore they shall never see his face, and enjoy him hereafter. Usua'y by a fond abuse we restrain the word *Saints* to the Saints departed; I, but we must be *Saints here*, or else we shall never be *Saints hereafter*: I mean true Saints; for by another abuse the word *Saints* is made matter of pretence in some, and matter of scorn by others; but to be *Saints indeed*, that is all the evidence you have to shew for your interest in your glorious hopes: What should others do with Heaven that are not Saints? How can they see God, that have not a pure eye? A dusky glass cannot represent the Image: * the degree of *Vision* is according to the degree of *Sanctification*. And what should a carnal heart, that knoweth no other Heaven but to eat, drink and sleep, and wallow in sensual delights, do with the inheritance of the Saints in light? The Apostle saith, we must be made meet for such a state, *Col. 1. 12.* The vessels of glory are first seasoned with grace: Alas, otherwise carnal men can no more tell what to do with Heaven, then Swine with Pearls. We do not look for a *Turkish Paradise*, but a *sinless state*; not to bathe our souls in carnal pleasures, but to be Consorts of the immaculate Lamb; our hopes engage us to holiness: 1 *John 3. 3.* He that hath this hope purifieth himself as Christ is pure: If his heart be fastned upon such an hope, as to see Christ as he is, and to be like him both for temper of Soul and state of body, certainly he must needs be an holy man; he will be practising and trying here upon earth how he can Conform to Christ, and begin his happiness as well as he can. Certainly he that expecteth that his body shall be like to Christs glorious Body, he will possess his vessel in sanctification and in honour:

* Καὶ ἐν τῇ
μαρτυρίᾳ τῆς
ἐκκλησίας
ὅτι ἐστὶν
ἐκείνῳ
ἀποστόλῳ.

* Καὶ τὴν
ἀνατολίαν
καὶ ἀνατολίαν
καὶ ἀνατολίαν
καὶ ἀνατολίαν.

He cannot use *his body* that's under so great hopes merely as a *strainer* for meats and drinks, and a *channel* for lust to pass through; his *mind* that shall *see God*, he cannot fill it with chaff, or suffer it to be occupied with *vanity*, *toying thoughts*, and *vile cares*, and *unworthy projects*: and his *affections* that shoud cleave to God inseparably, to be prostituted to every *base Object*. Thus with respect to our hopes we must be sanctified; the *foundation* and *seed of glory* is laid in *grace*, and that *life begun* which we must live for ever.

It serveth for Conviction: If Gods people are a sanctified people, then here is but sad news for two sorts of person.

Use 1.

* Deut. 32. 5.

† Calpar Stref.

in Miscellaneis.

Multi gloriantur

cor suum

bonum esse, cri-

amsi extus Vita

non respondeat;

desipiuntur ipsi

homines, nam

si candela in-

us accensa

est, lucerna ex-

us necessario

lucet & splen-

det; posito quod

cor suum bonum

est, tamen dam-

naberis, quia

Christus non

justitias secun-

dum opera. If

the Israelites

had slain and

eaten the Pass-

over, yet if the

door posts were

not sprinkled

with blood, the

Angels would

not spare them:

* Rev. 22. 15.

1. The prophane, that care not for holiness, God hath no *birth-right* for such *Esaus*; the portion of the Lord are an holy portion, but * these have a *spot that is not as the spot of his children*: See what *John* speaketh of such persons as wallow in their filthiness, 1 *John* 3. 8: *He that committeth sin is of the Devil, for the Devil sinneth from the beginning*; ο *παιῶν ἀμαρτίας*, he that tradeth in sin, and maketh it his work and business: You may presume that you belong to God, but you are of the Devil; you have not in deed the least pretence of a claim, and do not go so far as *hypocrites*, being so little careful to be *holy*, that you are not *moral*. Are you called? from what? where is the least evidence of it? I, but † *our hearts are better then we shew for*: This is to appeal to a witness that cannot be found; it is as if a man should lay claim to anothers Land, and pretend that he hath lost the Evidences; your guilt is written in legible Characters, that he that runneth may read it. 2. It convinceth persons that scoff at holiness: scoffing is the overflow of gall and malice, and a black mark, let it be found where it will be; In the general, it argueth a bad spirit, but especially when Religion is made a by-word and a reproach. When you deride men for their holiness, you deride them for that which is the express Image of the glorious God, and so deride God himself: *Holy Brethren*, as the Saints are stiled, *Heb.* 3. 1. should no more be a disgrace then *Holy Father*, as God himself is stiled, *John* 17. 11. You hate God more then you do the Saints, if you hate them for their holiness, which shineth in them with a saint lustre, but is infinitely and originally in God. Take heed of the *chair of scorers*, those are * *dogs that are without*, that

that bark at the splendor of Gods Image, that make *Saints* a word of disgrace : *Scoffing* *Ismaels* that will be mocking, are sure to be cast out, *Gen. 21. 9.* they do not belong to God : The Apostle interprets that *mocking* to be *persecution*, *Gal. 4. 27.* so it is in Gods account ; and yet it is always found in those that are *born after the flesh* : Prophane spirits think Religion a matter of nothing ; and men are wont to mock at others which make a great matter of what they account nothing. Oh remember, holiness is the badge of those which are the Lords called people ; and it should be a matter of reverence, not reproach.

Again, It serveth for Caution, to prevent mistakes : Christians, *Use 2.* look to your Sanctification ; *Psal. 4 3.* *Know that God hath set apart him that is godly for himself* : The Beasts worshippers have the Beasts mark, *Rev. 13. 16.* So also Gods children are stamped with his seal and impress ; *2 Tim. 2. 19.* *The foundation of the Lord standeth sure, having this seal, &c.* they are sealed with a mark of preservation, *The Lord knows those that are his* ; and they are sealed with a mark of distinction, *Let every one that nameth the Name of God depart from iniquity.* As coin is stamped on both sides, so hath Gods Seal a double Motto ; one that noteth his owning the Saints, the other that noteth their temper and disposition, *they depart from iniquity* : Take heed then, have you this seal and impress ? There are many things that look like sanctification, but are not ; I shall touch upon four, *Civility, Formality, restraining grace, and temporary grace.*

1. *Civility*, which is nothing else but a fair demeanour in the world, or in the Apostles expression, a *fair shew in the flesh*, a darker representation of holiness, rather *Heathenish strictness* than *Christian* : you may descry it by these Notes. 1. It is usually accompanied with ignorance, and little knowledge of Gods Institutions : Men live well, are no drunkards, no swearers, but know little of God, have no insight in matters of Religion ; like *Nicodemus*, a *strict Pharisee*, but grossly ignorant, *John 3. 10.* Spiritual life beginneth with knowledge, and endeth in a *rational strictness*, and what they do, they do upon principles ; Conscience is twayed by the acknowledgement of Gods Will : others live plausibly, but know not the ground and reason of their actions, and therefore are soon satisfied, never troubled about imperfections, because where there is no light, there is not that tenderness,

tenderness, which is found in real Christians, who look into the purity of the Law, and are troubled because they know so much of the Will of God, and do so far come short of it; as in a clear glass the least mote is soon espied. 2. There is little of Christ in such Souls; for a man that is satisfied with his own righteousness doth not prize Christ: *Paul* a Pharisee counted his works *gain*, which afterward he found to be *lost*, *Phil.* 3. 7. by *gain* he meaneth an advantage to procure the favour of God: *self* is wont to take up all their thoughts, and therefore moral strains suit more with them, then Gospel comforts, and doctrines that breed faith: *The Law is more natural to men then the Gospel*; and therefore with thole that are of a moral disposition, and no more, it findeth better entertainment and welcome then the Gospel doth: there is no *hungering* and *thirsting* after Christ; they do not see the need of the *sweetness* of his grace, of the *help* of his Spirit, going on in a plausible moral course, without rub or difficulty: whereas in the spiritual life * Christ doth all, and every day they see more cause to bless God for him. 3. *Usually there is some great prevailing sin*: Civility is but a *freer slavery*; one way or another Satan holdeth them captive, and their honesty and fair shew to the world is but to serve their carnal interests, to hide a lust, or feed a lust; and most commonly this sin is *worldliness*: Christ's young man that had kept all those things from his youth, had great possessions, and they were a great snare to his heart, *Mat.* 19. 22. The sin of the Pharisees was *vain-glory* and *ambition*: some sin or else there is reserved under the tongue, some sin kept with the greater allowance from Conscience, and the less shame from abroad, because otherwise the life is fair and honest. 4. *There is a greater care about actions then lusts*: Wrath and pride, and wanton thoughts are digested, because there is no violence and uncleanness in the conversation: Civility is all for the carriage, nothing for tempering the affections to such an order and moderation as becometh grace: *Paul* complaineth of his lusts, and the Law of sin within, *Rom.* 7. yea of such sinful workings as do not fall under the cognisance and discovery of the light of Nature, *Rom.* 7. 7. The first risings and stirrings of sin forbidden in the tenth Commandment, the least rebellion of Nature. Thus for Civility.

* Gal 2. 20.

2. Formality,

2. *Formality, or pretended grace*: you may be deceived in that; and therefore the Apostle speaketh of a *true holiness*, ^{ἡ ἐν ὁσιότητι} *Ephes. 4. 24.* in opposition to that which is feigned and counterfeited: Now false grace is always acted by *foreign and external considerations*; as puppets have not a principle of life within them, but are moved by an external force: The hypocrites principles of motion are without him, as carnal respects, self-ends, &c. True grace hath an inward propensity to comply with the Will of God; *there is a Law upon their bowels*: by-ends work by constraint, and carry the Soul contrary to its native inclination; a man would not do such a thing, were it not for such ends: therefore the Apostle saith, *1 Pet. 5. 2. Feed the flock that is among you, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind.* When a man acteth genuinely in a work, his *own heart* carrieth him to it more then all *outward encouragements*. Again, *False grace is shy of Gods presence and sight*: pretences are to deceive men; therefore such persons strive to get God out of their thoughts, they know his eye will find them out: But now truth of grace is ready to draw every thing into Gods sight; though they tremble to think what defects God can find in them, yet they appeal to him for the *sincerity of their hearts*: *John 20. 17. Lord thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee*; He would not excuse miscarriages, yet for the general temper and bent of his heart he referreth himself to Gods Omniscience. So *Job 31. 6. Let me be weighed in an even ballance, that God may know mine integrity*; and yet elsewhere he saith, *Job 42. 5, 6. Mine eye seeth thee, and therefore I abhor my self in dust and ashes*: In the one place he appealeth to God, for he was confident that *his integrity* would hold weight; and yet in the other he could even loath himself when he thought of God, because of so many *defects and failings*. So *David, Psal. 139. 23. Search me O Lord, and know my heart, &c.* No doubt but *David* was sensible that God could find enough in him; but Lord search, see if any thing be allowed with full leave of conscience. Again, *False grace doth not grow, unless it be worse and worse*; Pretences wither rather then thrive: God complaineth, *Jer. 7. 24. that they went backward rather then forward*: False grace is alwayes declining till it be wholly lost; like bad fair, that loseth of its acrimony and smartness every day till .

till it be *cast to the dunghil*: But now true grace, from a *grain* it groweth unto a *tree*, *Matth. 13.* from a *morning glimpse* to a *perfect noon*, *Prov. 4. 18.* from *smoking flax* it is blown up into a *flame*: The least *meal* in the *Battel*, and *oil* in the *Cruse*, when it is fed with a supply from *Heaven*, shall prosper into a *abundance*: *Nicodemus* that at first came to *Christ* by *night*, after *boldly* declareth himself for him, *John 19. 30.* Grace gets ground upon the *flesh*, and *holiness* by degrees advanceth into a *triumph*; Examine then whether you *increase* or *decrease*; if you go backward from *zeal* to *coldness*, from *strictness* to *looseness*; if you lose your care of *duty*, and *choiceness* of *spirit*, and there be no complaining, it is a sign grace was never wrought in truth. Once more, *False grace is not accompanied with humility*: When men the more they profess, the prouder they grow and more self-conceited; there is cause of suspicion: with true grace there alwayes goeth along a *spiritual poverty*, or a *sense of our spiritual wants*; the more *knowledge*, the more they discern their *ignorance*, compare *1 Cor. 8. 2.* with *Prov. 30. 2, 3.* the more *faith*, the more they bewail *unbelief*, and see a need of *increase* and *further growth*: *Mark 9. 24.* *Lord I believe, help mine unbelief.* Oh I want *faith*, what shall I do? Still I am haunted with *prejudicial* and *lessening* thoughts of *Gods al-fufficiency* and *goodness*. It is excellent when the *Soul* is thus kept *hungry* and *humble* under our enjoyments, and we * *forget the things that are behind*, because the things that are before us, or not yet attained, are much more.

* Phil. 3. 13.

* See Mr. Lyfords Catechism last edition, page 308, 309.

3. The next thing is * *restraining grace*, which is nothing else but an awe upon the *Conscience*, incining men to *forbear sin*, though they do not hate it. Now you may discern it, partly because *love* is of little use and force with such kind of spirits; they are chained up by their *own fears*: The great Evangelick motive is *mercy*; *Rom. 12. 1.* *I beseech you by the mercies of God*: The heart is most ingenuous when it yieldeth to such intreaties: It is good to serve *God* with *reverence*, but a servile awe hath little of *grace* in it. It is true indeed, it is better to have a *slavish fear* than none at all; therefore *David* saith to them that would be held in with no other restraints, *Psal. 4. 4.* *Stand in awe, and sin not*: to cool and charm their fury he maketh use of the argument of *Gods vengeance*; though this is also the fault of *slavish*

flavish spirits, that carnal respects and thoughts of outward inconvenience do equally sway them, as a *servile fear of Gods Judgments*. Again, you may know it, because it doth not *destroy* sin, but only *prohibit* the exercise of it; *Abimelech* lust was not *quenched*, yet God *withheld* him from sinning against *Sarah*, Gen. 20. 6. The heart is not *renewed*, though the action be *checked*; as *Israel* had an adulterous heart towards God, when her way was *hedged up with thorns*, *Hosea* 2. 6. Again, it is their trouble that they are held in the *stocks* of Conscience; they would fain be enlarged, and find out their own paths.

4. The next thing that looketh like Sanctification, but is not, is *common grace*: This is a distinct thing from all the rest, yet I call it *common grace*, because it may be in them that fall away and depart from God: it differeth from *Civility*, because it is more Christian and Evangelical; from *Formality*, because that is only in pretence and shew, whereas this is a real work upon the Soul; from *restraining grace*, because that is only conversant about sins and duties out of a servile awe of God, but this seemeth to carry out the Soul with some affection to Christ; it is a common work, good in its self, which God ordaineth in some to be a *preparation* and beginning of the work of grace: Of this the Apostle speaketh, *Heb.* 6. 4. 5. where he calleth it an *enlightening*, a *taste of Christ* and of the *powers of the world to come*, and a *partaking of the holy Ghost*; meaning of the gifts of the Spirit, abilities for holy duties, &c. of all which elsewhere; only now let me note three things. 1. That the *light* there spoken of is not *humbling*. 2. The *taste* is not *ravishing*, and drawing out the Soul after more of Christ. 3. Their *gifts* are not *renewing* and sanctifying.

1. That *light* is not *humbling*; He saith, they are *enlightened*, but he doth not say they are *humbled*: Foundations toter that are not laid deep enough: The more *true light* a man hath, the more cause of *self-abasement* will he find in himself: You can never *magnifie Christ* enough, and you can never *debase self* enough; and certainly Christ is most exalted when you are most abased, *Isai.* 2. 19. *Dagon* must fall upon his face, if you mean to set up the *Ark*; and if Christ shall be *precious* to you, you must be *vile* in your own eyes; none have such *true revivings* as the humble, *Isai.* 57. 15, 16. True humiliation is far from

weakening your comforts, it maketh them more *full and sure*: therefore a main thing that was wanting in those spoken of in *Heb. 6.* was *humiliation*, and their fault was a *rash closing* with Christ in the pride of their hearts.

2. Their *taste was not ravishing*, and affecting the heart so as to engage it to seek after Christ; they had but loose and slight desires of happiness, glances upon the glory of Heaven and the comforts of the Gospel, which possibly might stir up a wish, *Oh, that I might dye the death of the righteous, &c.* they were not serious and holy desires after Christ, after grace and strength to serve him: The Saints that have a *taste* * groan after a fuller communion in his *graces* as well as *comforts*; that experience which they have had of Christ, maketh them long for more: But now in Temporaries there is a *loose assent* and *slight affection*, a taste enough to prevail with them to make some profession for a while, a rejoicing for a season, &c.

3. Their *gifts are not renewing and sanctifying*, such possibly as may make them *useful to the Church*, but do not change the hearts: the Apostle saith, they were made *partakers of the Holy Ghost*; that is, had some share, it may be a plentiful share of Church gifts, so as to be able to carry on duties to the *edification* and *comfort* of others; but alas what is a man the better, if the heart be oppressed with sins in the mean time, and be not upright with God? *1 Cor. 13. 1. Though I speak with the tongues of men and Angels and have not charity, I am become but as a sounding Brass, and tinkling Cymbal.* Though you can speak of the things of God with much enlargement and affection, pray sweetly, all is but as *tinkling* with God, if there be not *saving grace*: It is a great evidence that we are such as the Apostle speaketh of, when the *affection* doth not answer the *expression* of a duty, nor the *life* our *knowledge*, and *gifts* have not a proportionable influence upon *practise*. So much for that Point.

Having spoken of the State, I come now to speak of the Author of it, *God the Father*. But why is it so distinctly attributed to the Father? Is not Christ our *Sanctification*? *1 Cor. 1. 30.* and is it not called the *Sanctification of the Spirit*? *2 Thes. 2. 14.* The Answer shall draw out the strength of the phrase in these Propositions. 1. It is true, that the whole Trinity one way

or other concurrerth to the work of holiness; those works *ad extra* are *indivisa* common to all the Persons; the Father sanctifieth, the Son sanctifieth, and the Holy Ghost sanctifieth: the same may be said of *preserving* and *calling*. 2. Though all work joyntly, yet there are *distinct personal operations*, by which they make way for the glory of each other; the *love* of the Father for the *glory* of the Son, and the *glory* of the Son for the *power* of the Spirit. See how the Scripture followeth these things: You shall find first, that no man cometh to the Son, but from the Father by Election, *John 6. 37. All that the Father giveth me shall come to me: so verie 65. No man cometh unto me, unless it be given him of my Father.* Look again, and you shall find that no man cometh to the Father from the bondage of sin and Satan, but by the Son, through his Redemption and Mediation; *John 14. 6. I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life; no man cometh unto the Father but by me.* Again, you shall see no man is united to the Son but by the Holy Ghost, who *worketh* in those whom the Father did choose, and the Son redeem; and therefore the sanctification of the Spirit is as necessary as the Blood of Jesus, *1 Per. 1. 2.* So that you see all have their distinct work; the *Inchoation* is from the Father, the *Dispensation* by the Son, and the *Consummation* by the Spirit: from the Father, in the Son, and through the Spirit; there is *Gods choice*, *Christs purchase*, and the *Spirits application*: all are joynd in one verie, for indeed they must not be severed, even in the place last alledged, *1 Per. 1. 2.* 3. Because the first distinct operation is the Fathers, therefore the whole work in Scripture is often ascribed to him; he is said to *justify*; *The Justifier of them that believe in Jesus, Rom. 3. 26.* Some is said elsewhere to *purge*; *John 15. 1, 2. I am the Vine, and my Father is the Husbandman; he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit: All dependeth upon the decree of his love; Christ doth not work upon a person, unless he be given to him by the Father; and therefore he being first in order and operation, the whole work is made his work: sanctified in God the Father: Observe,*

That sanctification is Gods work, wrought in us by the Father. Observe as 1.
To cleanse the heart is beyond the power of the creature; it can no more make it self *holy*, then make it self to be: We could *defile* our selves, but we cannot *cleanse* our selves;

* Domine, er-
rare per me po-
tuit, redire non
potui. Aulin.
Meditat.
† Non potest
reddi nisi ab eo
à quo potuit
dari, A. 18.

* as the sheep can go astray of its self, but it can never return to the fold without the shepherds care and help. Lusts are too hard for us, and so are the duties of obedience: † God that gave us his Image at first, must again plant it in the Soul: Who can repair Nature depraved, but the Author of Nature? When a Watch is out of order we send it to the Workman: We are his workmanship in Christ, Ephes. 2. 10. God taketh it to be his Pre-rogative. I am the Lord that sanctifieth thee: Grace is his immediate creature; Mans will contributeth nothing to the work but resistance and rebellion; and outward means work not, unless God put in with them; else why should the same Word preached by the same Minister, work in some, and hinder others? all the difference ariseth from Gods grace, which acteth according to pleasure. Well then,

1. Let us wait upon God till the work be accomplished: Our wills are oblique and perverse, but God never made a creature too hard for himself; he is able to do this thing for us, and 'tis our comfort we have such a God to go to. The Heathens that groped and felt after God, were to seek of a power to quell their lusts, and therefore were put upon sad remedies; whereas all is made easie to you in the power of God through Christ. Crates gave this advice to one that came to him to know how he should subdue the lust of uncleanness, he answered, * that he should either famish himself, or hang himself; they knew no remedy but offering violence to Nature, or else death and despair. Democritus binded himself, because he could not look upon women without lusting after them. † Now God teacheth us to put out the eyes of our lust, not of our bodies; Bless God that you know whose work it is, and to whom to go for Sanctification.

2. Use. Praise the Lord when ever this work is accomplished; Not I, but grace; it must not be ascribed to our works, or to any power that is in our selves, but to Gods mercy, Christs merits, and the Spirits efficacy: There is Gods grant; To her was granted to be covered with fine linen, the righteousness of the Saints, Rev. 19. 18. God the Father giveth leave or issueth forth an Authentick Act and Decree in the Court of Heaven; as Esther by the grant of the King was supplid out the Kings Wardrobe. Then there is Christs merit; the stream wherein we

* Prius famem
sustul, deinde
laqueum.
Tertul. in A-
pol.
† Christianus
salvus oculis
jæninam
videt. Tertul.
ibidem.

are washed floweth out of Christs own heart; 1 John 1.7. *The Blood of Christ cleanseth us from all sin.* Then there is the *Spirits efficacy*; no less power will vanquish the proud heart of man. *Tis notable, that grace is expressed not only by the notion of * *Creation*, which is a making things out of nothing; * *Psalm 51. 10.* but also by † *Victory*, or a powerful overcoming of opposition: *Ephes. 2. 10.* In *Creation* as there was *nothing to help*, so there was nothing to resist and hinder; but in man there is besides a *death in sin*, a † *Luk. 1. 21, 22.* *life of resistance* against grace; therefore *Sanctification* must entirely be ascribed to God: we deserve it not, it cometh from the *Fathers good-will* and *Christs merit*; we *work* it not, 'tis accomplished by the power of the Holy Ghost. 2 Cor. 4. 6. 2 Cor. 10. 5. 1 John 4. 4.

Again observe, *That though the work of grace be immediately wrought by another person, yet our thoughts in believing must not stay till we ascend and come up to God the Father.* You shall see the Scripture carrieth out our acts of faith to him every where: *Rom 4. 24.* *If we believe in him, who raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead;* that is, in God the Father. So *John 12. 44.* *He that believeth in me, believeth not in me, but in him that sent me:* that [not] is not negative, but corrective; not only in me, but his thoughts must ascend to the Father also, who manifesteth himself in me. So *John 14. 1.* *To believe in God, believe also in me.* Both expressions may be imperative: Besides believing in Christ, we must also believe in God, as the first Fountain and Author of grace. Now the Reasons are, 1. Because all grace beginneth with the Father; the first in order of being, is first in order of working; 'tis the Father that floweth out to us in Christ and by the Spirit: Whatever Christ hath and is, he hath from him as the original Author; 1 Cor. 1. 30. *Of him Jesus Christ is made to us sanctification.* The high Priest went into the Sanctuary before he blessed the people; so doth Jesus Christ sanctifie you in the Father and from the Father: as Mediator certainly he is to be considered as Gods Servant and Instrument. Well then, Reason is in its progress, till it climb up to the first cause of a thing; so should Faith; do not leave till you come to the Father, who is the highest Fountain of grace. 2. Because whatever is done to you by Christ, is done with a respect to his Fathers love: *John 17. 2.* *Thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him:*

So see verse 6. *I have manifested thy Name unto them, thine they were, and them thou gavest me*: That was the ground of Christs respect, the Fathers donation, or the charge he received from him: and therefore you must look upon the *Fathers love* as well as *Christs care*; for in all his respects to us he still acknowledgeth his obedience to the Father; and indeed it giveth us a double ground of hope: * the Son loveth us because the *Father requir'd* it, and the Father loveth us because the Son *asketh* it; if

* *Causa ob*

*quam filius nos
amat quia ipse
à patre demin-
datum est. &
causa cur pater
nobis faveret, est
quia hoc filius
ab ipso postulat
& promeretur.*
&c. See *Stella*
at large de amo-
re Dei, cap. 18.

Christ be *faithful* to his Father we are sure to be loved, or if the Father have any *respect and love* to Christ. 3. Because 'tis a great support and comfort to faith to consider of the Father in the act of believing: two are better then one; and 'tis often made a priviledge to have *the Father and the Son*, 1 John 1. 3.

and 2. 23, 24. 2 John 9. & *alib*. There is the *Fathers love* and the *Sons merit*; either severally will not yield that joy and peace in believing, and therefore 'tis good to have them both together: There is no access to the Father but in the Son: What will *guilt* do with *Justice*? *stubble* with *consuming fire*? God out of Christ is *terrible*, rather then *comfortable*; therefore 'tis

- said, 1 Pet. 1. 21. that *by him we believe in God*; that is, by Christ through his merit we come comfortably to pitch upon God the Father. So again, Christ separate from the Father doth not yield such firm grounds of confidence; there must be some act of the Father to give us full security; for in the business of Redemption God the Father is represented as the *offended wronged party*, who is to receive satisfaction: we are sensible of the wrong and offence, Conscience feeleth that; we must be also sensible of his favour and grace towards us: now when we see him *first* in all acts of grace, that taketh away all jealousy and scruple. 4. Because in the Fathers Love there are many circumstances which are *very engaging* to the Soul, which are not to be found in the rest of the divine Persons; for he being *first in order*, hath the *chiefest work* ascribed to him, but especially are not to be found in Christ as *Mediator*: and because Christ as Mediator is most known to the creatures, I shall prosecute this matter with respect to that Consideration. 1. In the Fathers love and acts of grace there is an *original Fulness*; Christs fulness as Mediator is but derived out of the Fathers plenty; Col. 1. 19. *It pleased the Father that in him all fulness should dwell*:

dwell: And 'tis limited by the Fathers Will in the dispensation of it; all that Christ dispensed was according to the Charge and Commandment given him by his Father; see *Mat. 20. 23. It is not mine to give, save to those for whom it is prepared of my Father*: Christ doth not deny his Authority to give glory as well as grace, only he sheweth how in all the dispensations proper to the Mediator he was limited by the Will and Counsel of the Father: And so he denyeth to dispense the knowledge of times and seasons, because *the Father had kept it in his own Power, Acts 1. 7.* So that now 'tis an engaging Consideration to remember that the Father, whose Will is absolute, who hath an original Fullness of all grace, that *he himself loveth us*, and is first in all acts of blessing. 2. In the Fathers acts you have the purest and freest apprehension of love; he began and first broke the business of our Redemption: God the Son can have an *higher motive*, the Fathers Will, but God the Father can have no higher motive than his own love; his *elective love* was the first rise and spring whence all that love that passeth out to the creature issueth forth, and therefore here we have the freest apprehension of love: there was a love of the Father anteceding the merit of Christ; *John 3. 16. God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son*; there was the most independent and free act of love.

It serveth to press us to give a *distinct glory* in believing to *us*. God the Father: Get a right apprehension of the divine Persons, and the *several endearments* with which their personal operations are represented. 'Tis said *John 5. 23. That God will have all men honour the Son as they honour the Father.* God is most honoured when your thoughts are most distinct and explicate in this matter. Do not forget the Father, you are *his gift* as well as the *Sons purchase* and the *Spirits charge*: If God the Father had not loved you before all worlds, Jesus Christ would not have redeemed you; and if Christ had not redeemed you, the Spirit would never sanctify you: and as the Spirit will not work unless you look upon him as *Christ's Spirit, John 16. 14. He shall glorify me, for he shall receive of mine*; so Christ came to glorify the Father, and to finish his work, *John 17. 4.* Bless them and praise them all then. If you receive any thing, see the *Fathers bounty* in it, the *freeness* and *everlastingness* of his Love stamped upon

upon what you have. So if you want any thing, holiness, comfort, grace, pardon, reflect not only upon the *subtlety of Christs merit*, but the *freeness of the Fathers love*: You deal with a God of bowels and bounty; Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, all are yours. There is a *fond affection* in some, to carry all things in the Name of *Christ*, even such acts wherein the *Father* is most concerned; as the former Age carried all Dispensations in the Name of *God Almighty*, without any distinct reflection upon *God the Son*, in whom the Father will be honoured, and by whom we have an access to the Father: So many in this Age, in their *popular discourses* and prayers, carry all things in the Name of *God the Son*, and with a fond and delicious affection ingeminate the Name, *Jesus Christ, Jesus Christ*, so that the honour and adoration due to the other Persons is neglected and forgotten; whereas Christ is to be acknowledged *Lord* in all Tongues and among all Nations, *to the Glory of God the Father*, *Phil. 2. 11.*

But now 'tis high time to proceed to the second and last Manifestation of their effectual Calling, [*Preserved in Jesus Christ*,] *Τετηρημένοι ἐν Χριστῷ*, kept in or by him; the meaning is, they were not only *sanctified* for the present out of the store and plenty of God the Father, but should for ever be kept in that estate by Jesus Christ. The point is, *That Gods called and sanctified people are preserved and kept in their state of grace and holiness in and by Jesus Christ*. The point asserteth two things, that they are kept *by Christ* and *in Christ*, that is, not only for *his sake*, but by virtue of *union with him*; Jesus Christ is the *Cabinet* wherein Gods Jewels are kept; so that if we would stand, we must get out of our selves, and get into him, in whom alone there is safety. I might handle this latter Branch apart, namely, that *Union with Christ is the ground of our safety and preservation*: but because I am sensible that I have stayed too long upon this Verse already, I shall content my self with handling upon this occasion the general Doctrine of the Perseverance of the Saints: And first, I shall give you the *state* of it, how far we may expect to be preserved. 2. The Grounds of Certainty and Assurance in this kind.

First, How far we may look for Preservation: The Doctrine
of

of Perseverance is much impugned ; but the Earth is never the more unsettled, because to giddy brains it seemeth to run round : however let us grant what must be granted, and then the truth will be burdened with less prejudice. *Seeming grace* may be lost; *Take from him that which he hath*, *Matth. 25. 28. in Luke 8. 18. Take from him that which he seemed to have.* Blazing Comets and Meteors are soon spent, and fall from Heaven like lightning, while *stars* keep their orb and station : A *building in the sand* will totter ; and *Hypocrites* be discovered before the Congregation, *Prov. 26. 26.* Again, *Initial* or preparative grace may fail, such as is spoken of *Heb. 6. 4, 5.* to wit, illumination, external reformation, temporary faith, devout moods, some good beginnings, &c. Plenty of blossoms do not always foretel more of Fruit ; some dye in the very pangs of the birth, and are still-born. Yet again, *True grace* may suffer a shrewd decay, but not an utter loss ; the leaves may fade when the root liveth : In temptations Gods children are sorely shaken ; their *heel* may be bruised, as Christ was, but their *head* is not crushed : Peter denied Christ, but did not fall from grace ; there is a *remaining seed*, *1 John 3. 9.* 'Tis notable what *Chrysostom* observeth concerning Christs prayer for Peter, *Luke 22. 32. I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not :* * *Mark* (saith he) *he doth not say,* * *I have prayed for thee that thou shouldst not deny me, but I have prayed that thy faith should not altogether vanish and be abolished* Once more, such grace as serveth to our well being in Christ may be taken away, joy, peace, cheerfulness, &c. As a man may have a being, though his well-being be lost ; he is a man, though a bankrupt, though poor, though sick, though diseased : so a Christian may be living, though he be not lively. Yet further, The operations of grace may be obstructed for a great while : a fit of swooning is not a state of death ; there may be no acts, and yet their seed remaineth ; this may last for a long time : *David* lay in a spiritual swoon *nine moneths* ; for he awaked not till *Nathan* came to him, *Psal. 51.* the title ; and when *Nathan* came to him, the child begotten upon *Bathsheba* was born ; for he saith, *2 S. m. 12. 14. The child which is born to thee shall dye.* Yet further Grace if left to us would soon be lost ; we shewed that in Innocency ; but 'tis our advantage that our security lieth in Gods promises, and not our own ; that we are not our own

* *Ork 220.*
iva un apmiz
ann. ore for
exdity tny
tisy to.
Chrysof

keepers ; that grace is a Jewel not trusted but in safe hands ; that perseverance is Gods gift, not mans act ; and that Christ hath a Charge to conduct the Saints, and keep them safe to everlasting Glory, *John 6. from 37. to 40. and John 10. 28. I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any perish, none shall pluck them out of my hand : my Father which gave them is greater then all ; none is able to pluck them out of my Fathers hand :* They neither shall nor can ; God and Christ are engaged in the keeping of them ; Christ by Gods command as Mediator, and God by Christs merit : therefore he that separateth us from God must tug with Jesus Christ himself, and be too hard for him also, or else he can never pluck them out of his hands. If they should question Christs power, because of the ignominy of the Cross ; the *Fathers hands* are also engaged, for our greater assurance : Can any creature loosen his Eternal and Almighty grasp ? and pluck out those whom the Father hath a mind to keep ?

We do not plead for any wild assurance and certainty of Perseverance ; we do not say that they that neglect means, or grieve the Spirit, and do what they list, are sure that they shall not miscarry ; that is against the nature of Gods dispensation, and the nature of this assurance, and therefore but a vain cavil. 'Tis against the nature of Gods dispensation ; whom he maketh to persevere, he maketh them to persevere in the use of means, *Hezekiah* had assurance from God of life for fifteen years, yet he taketh a lump of Figs, and applieth it as a plaister to the boyl, *Isai. 38. 5.* with 21. More clearly, *Acts 27. 31. All shall come to land ; but Except ye abide in the ship ye cannot be safe :* We are sure of this life as long as God hath any service to do for us, yet we are bound to get food and rayment, and to use all means to preserve life : This was Satans cavil against Gods protection over Christ, Thou art sure not to fall, therefore neglect means, cast thy self upon danger, *Matth. 4. 9, 10.* You learn this doctrine from the Devil ; Thou maist do what thou list, thou art sure to be safe ; 'tis the Devils Divinity. Again, 'Tis against the nature of this assurance ; he that hath tasted Gods love in Gods way, cannot reason so : A child that hath a good father that will not see him perish, shall he waste and embezzle his estate he careth not how ? A wicked child may presume thus

of his father (though it be very desingenuous) because of his natural interest and relation to his father ; the kindness which he expecteth is not built upon *moral choice*, but *nature* : but a child of God cannot, because he cannot grow up to this certaintie but in the exercise of grace ; 'tis begotten and nourished by godly exercises : and the thing it self implyeth a contradiction ; this were to fall away because *we cannot fall away* : You may as soon say that the fire should make a man freeze with cold, as that certaintie of perseverance in grace should make us do actions contrary to grace.

Again, We do not say that a Believer is so sure of his conser-
vation in a state of grace , as that he needeth not to be wary and
jealous of himself ; 1 *Cor.* 10. 12. *Let him that standeth take
heed lest he fall.* There is a *fear of Caution*, as well as a fear of
diffidence and distrust ; and there is a great deal of difference be-
tween weakening the *security of the flesh*, and our *confidence in
Christ* : None more apt to suspect themselves then they that are
most sure in God, lest by improvidence and unwatchfulness they
should yield to corruption : Christ had prayed that *Peters* faith
might not fail, yet together with the other Apostles he biddeth
him *Watch*, *Luke* 22. 40, and 46. The *fear of God* is a pre-
serving grace, and taken into the Covenant ; *Jer.* 32. 40. *I will
put my fear into their hearts, and they shall not depart from me.*
This is a fear which will stand with faith and certaintie ; 'tis a
fruit of the same spirit, and doth not hinder assurance, but *guard*
it ; 'tis a fear that maketh us watchful against all occasions to sin
and spiritual distempers, that we may not give offence to God :
as an ingenuous man that hath an inheritance passed over to him
by his friend in Court, is careful not to offend him.

Again, This certaintie of our standing in grace doth not ex-
clude prayer ; *Luke* 22. 46. *Watch and pray, that ye enter not in-
to temptation.* Perseverance is Gods gift, and it must be sought
in Gods way ; by *Christs intercession*, to preserve the Majesty
of God, and by *our prayers*, that we may constantly *profess our
dependance upon God*, and *renew our acquaintance with him* ; be-
sides, by asking blessings in prayer, we are the more *warned of
our duty* ; 'tis a means to keep us gracious and holy : As those
that converse often with Kings had need be decently clad, and
go neat in their apparel ; so he that speaketh often to God is

bound to be more holy, that he may be the more acceptable to him.

Again, 'Tis not a *discontinued*, but a *constant perseverance* that we plead for; not as if an elect person could be quite driven out of the state of grace, though he be saved at length; he cannot fall *totum à toto in totum*, the whole man with full consent from all grace and godliness; he may sin foully, but not fall off *totally*; no more then *finally*; there is something that remaineth, *a seed, an unction, a root in a dry ground*, that will bud and scent again: Briefly, true grace shall never utterly be lost, though it be much weakened, but in the use of means it shall constantly be preserved to eternal life.

Once more, and I have done with the state of the Question: God doth not only require the condition of standing, or continuing in the exercise of grace, but give it infallibly: The Precepts of the Covenant of Grace are also Promises: *Heb. 8. 10. This is the Covenant that I will make with the house of Israel, &c.* where all the Articles carry the form of Promises; God undertaketh to fulfill our part in us, when we submit to the Covenant. So *Jer. 32. 40. I will put my fear into their hearts, &c.* * If there be any breach, it must be from our departing from God, or Gods departing from us: Now God never departeth, his Love never permitteth him to repent of giving his fear and putting his grace into our hearts; but all the fear is of our departing from God: So some say, God will not depart from us, if we be *not wanting to our selves*: And Bernard observed that our own flesh is not mentioned *Rom. 8. What shall separate us from God? &c. Soli enim deserere possumus propria voluntate*, our own will may separate us and withdraw us from God: And the Remonstrants, Though God doth not repent *doni dati*, of what he hath given, yet we may repent *doni accepti & retenti*, of what we have received, and grow weary of the service of God. But all is answered by Gods undertaking in the Covenant; *I will put my fear into their hearts, that they shall not depart from me*: He will give faith, and love, and fear, bestow and continue such Graces as dispose the Soul to Perseverance.

Secondly, The Grounds of Certainty, by which it may appear that we shall be preserved in that state of grace, unto which we are called in Jesus Christ: The Grounds are many; put them

all

* Gods love will not let him depart from us, *Isa. 54. 10.* and fear will not let us depart from God.

all together, and you may easily spell out of ~~the~~ the *Perseverance of the Saints*.

1. There are some grounds on God the Fathers part; there is his *everlasting Love*, and *all-sufficient Power*. His *everlasting Love*: God doth not love for a fit, but for ever; *From everlasting to everlasting*, Psal. 103. 17. before the world was, and when the world is no more: Gods Love is not founded upon any *temporal accident*, but on his *own Counsel*, in which there can be ** no change*, because the same reasons that moved him to chuse at first, continue for ever: God never repented in time of what he purposed before all time: Rom. 11. 29. *His gifts and calling are without repentance*: By *gifts* he meaneth such as are proper to the Elect; and by *calling*, effectual calling; such is *αἰώνιον*, according to his eternal Purpose, of these he never repents: The fruits of repentance in men are *shame and sorrow*; now God is never *ashamed* of his choice, nor sorry for his choice, so as to wish it undone. And then the other ground is his *all-sufficient Power*; Almightyness is engaged in the preservation of grace, by his eternal Love and Will, John 10. 28, 29. Can they pluck Christ from the Throne? are they stronger then Christs Father?

* Ἀμεταβάτης
τὸς ἑαῖς.
Heb 6. 17.

2. There are grounds on Christs part; his *everlasting Merit*, and *close Union between him and us*, and *constant Intercession*. For his Merit see Heb. 9. 12. *He is entered into the holy place, having obtained an eternal Redemption for us*. Legal expiations did but last from year to year, but Christs merit for ever and ever; his *Redemption is eternal*, not only as 'tis of use in all ages of the Church, but in respect of every particular Saint: those who are once redeemed by Christ, they are not redeemed for a time, so as to fall away again; that would argue that the virtue of Christs Blood were spent, and could preserve them no longer; but they are for ever kept to Salvation. So Heb. 10. 14. *By one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified*: He hath not only purchased a *possibility of Salvation*, but all that we need to our *full perfection*; 'tis not for a *certain time*, but for ever. Then there is a *close Union* between him and us, this is the notion of the Text, *preserved in Christ*. * Look as 'tis impossible to sever the leaven and the dough, when they are once mingled and kneaded together; so Christ and a Believer, when they are

* sicut impossibile est massam & pasta separare.
Luther.

united

united together there is no parting more: Can Christs mystical Body be maimed? or lose a joynt? Then his *constant Intercession*, that's another ground, a Copy of which we have in the 17. of *John*, where he saith, *Keep them through thy Name, &c. and Keep them from the evil, &c.* See *Heb. 7. 25.* He is able to save to the uttermost those that come to God by him, for he liveth for ever to make *Intercession* for them: He is interceding with God, that the merit of his death may be applied to us; and what's that? * *Salvation to the uttermost, or to the end.* The heirs of Salvation need not fear miscarrying: Jesus Christ, who is the *Testator*, who by Will and Testament made over the heritage to them, he also is the *Executor*, he liveth for ever to see his own Will executed; he died once to make the Testament, and he liveth for ever to see it made good: When ever we are in danger, he is intreating his Father for supports and assistances of grace.

3. On the *Spirits part*, there is a *continued influence* so as to maintain the *essence* and *seed* of grace: The Fathers love is continued by the *merit* of Christ, that he may not depart from us; and we are preserved by the *Spirit of Christ*, that we may not depart from him: He doth not only put into our hearts *faith, fear, love*, and other graces at first; but he maintaineth and keepeth them, that the fire may never go out: Our hearts are his *Temple*, and he doth not love to leave his dwelling place: And besides, in the *Oeconomy* of Salvation, 'tis his Office to glorifie Christ as his *Vicergerent*, and to be our *Comforter*; therefore with respect to the *honour* of Christ, and the *comfort* of *Believers*, he preserveth and maintaineth that grace that is once really wrought in our hearts. To preserve the glory of Christ thus, Christ you know hath received a *Charge* from the Father to lose nothing, *John 6. 39.* neither *body* nor *soul*, nothing that belongeth to an elect person: Now that he may be true to his trust, he sendeth the *Spirit* as his *Deputy* or *Executor*, that his Merit may be fully applied: 'Tis for the honour of Christ, that where ever the work is begun, where ever he hath been an * *Author*, there he may be a *Finisher* also. 'Twas said of the foolish Builder, that he began, and was not able to make an end: this dishonour can never be cast upon Christ, because of the power and faithfulness of the Spirit; he doth *καταρτίζεισθαι*, *Phil. 1. 6.*

* *Heb. 7. 25.*
A.C.

* *H.b. 12. 2.*

go through with the work which he hath begun; the Spirit is to fit vessels for glory: he doth not use to leave them *half carved*; he is faithful to Christ, as Christ is to his Father: the Father chooseth the vessel, Christ buyeth them, and the Spirit carveth and fitteth them, that they may be vessels of praise and honour. But this is not all, He preserveth and continueth us in the state of grace as our *Comforter*; by working grace he puts us into an expectation of glory and happiness; and to make it good, he carrieth on the work without failing; therefore grace is called the first fruits of the Spirit, *Rom. 8. 23.* and the earnest of the Spirit, *2 Cor. 1. 22.* and *5. 6.* for it hath a double use, to be a taste and a pledge: 'tis a taste, to shew us how good eternal life is; and a pledge, to shew us how sure it is: The first degree of Regeneration is of this nature; 'tis an earnest or gage, assuring us of a more perfect enjoyment; the livery and seisin of glory to come: As soon as a real change is wrought, the Spirit of God doth give us earnest; and will God lose his earnest? will he give us a pledge, and fail our expectation? Surely no.

Let us now come to Application.

It presseth us to persevere with the more care; 'tis no unreasonable inference: see *1 John 2. 27, 28. Ye shall abide in him: And now little children, abide in him.* Since we have so many advantages of standing, let not us fall away: Oh how great will your sin be, if you should miscarry and dishonour God! We pity a child that falleth, when 'tis not looked after; but when a froward child wresteth and forceth it self out of the arms of the Nurse, we are angry with it. You have more reason to stand than others, being brought into an unchangeable state of grace; being held in the arms of Christ, God will be very angry with your slips and failings: Mercy holdeth you fast, and you seek to wrest your selves out of Mercy's arms; None can sin as you do, with such frowardness, with such dishonour to God; you disparage the Spirit's custody, the merit of Christ, and the mercy of the Father. See *Heb. 4. 1. Let us therefore fear, a promise being left to us of entering into his Rest, lest any should seem to come short of it.* Look as some seem to stand that do not, so some seem to fall utterly that do not: A child of God indeed cannot come short, but he should not seem, that is, give any appearance of coming short: When our religious course is interrupted, and

we give way to *them* and folly, that's *a seeming to come short*; and to you bring a scandal upon the *love of God*, as if it were *changeable*; upon the *merit of Christ*, as if it were not a perfect *Merit*: *Scandalous Professors* make *Arminians*; in an age of *defection*, no wonder if men plead for the *Apostacy of the Saints*.

Pse 2.

If you fall through *weakness*, be not utterly dismayed; As the *Spinner* leaveth a lock of wool to draw on the next thread; so there is somewhat left: when you are departed from God, you have more hold-fast upon him than another sinner; a *child*, though a *prodigal*, go to him and say, *Father*. *David* pleadeth the reliques of grace yet left, *Psal. 119. 176. I have gone astray like a sheep, seek thy servant, for I do not forget thy Commandments*; as if he had said, Lord, I have sinned through *weakness*, but I hope there is some grace left, some bent of heart towards thee. So the Church, *Isai. 64. 8, 9. Now O Lord, thou art our Father, &c. Yea, God is angry when we do not plead: So Jer. 3. 4. Wilt thou not cry, Thou art my Father? &c.* You have an interest, though you have been *disobedient*: Thus do, and your falls will be an advantage; as you have seen men go back to fetch their leaps more commodiously.

Ese 3.

When you stand, let it excite you to love and thankfulness; Nothing maketh the *Saints* love God more than the *unchangeableness of his Love*: When they see themselves safe in the midst of *weaknesses*, and Satans *dayly assaults*, it doth much in dear God to their Souls. Certainly *Daniel* was much affected with his *preservation in the Lions den*, when he saw the *Lions* ramping and roaring about him, and yet restrained with the chains of *Providence*, that they could doe him no harm: So the children of God must needs love their *Preserver*, when they consider what *dangers* are round about them; how little they subsist by their * *own strength*, and how much they have done a thousand times to cause God to *withdraw his Spirit* from them; and therefore the great argument why the *Saints* do love and praise him, is not only the *freedom of his grace*, but the *unchangeableness and constancy of it*: *His mercy endureth for ever*; 'tis several times repeated, *Psal. 136. So Psal. 106. 1. Praise ye the Lord; O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good, for his mercy endureth for ever.* No form is more frequent in the mouths of the *Saints*: and good reason; for alas, if we were left

2 Sam. 2. 9.

left to our selves, we! should damn our selves every hour; we have a **revolting heart*: we are like glasses without a bottom, ** Jer. 5. 23. and 14. 10.* as soon as they are out of hand they are broken; we cannot stand of our selves: and we have a *restless enemy*, that desireth to toise us and vex us, as wheat is tossed from sieve to sieve, *Luke 22. 31.* and we have often forfeited Gods protection, and grieved him day by day; were it not for *everlasting Mercy*, what would become of us? Certainly they that do not love God for their preservation, they are not sensible of their condition in the world: what a *naughty heart* they carry about with them 'Tis a miracle that ever grace should be preserved there where there is so much pride, love of pleasures, worldly cares; brutish lusts; that such an *heavenly plant* can thrive in the midst of so many *weeds*. Nor what a *busie Devil* they have to do withal, who watcheth all advantages, as a dog that standeth waving his tail, ('tis *Chrysostom's* comparison) and expecting a bit; and his envy and malice is most bent against them that have most grace. Finally, they do not consider that the world is full of snares and dangerous allurements; for if they did, they could not chuse but fall a blessing of God for Jesus Christ, who yet fastneth them as a nail in the holy place. I remember one of the Fathers bringeth in the *Flesh*, saying, *Ego deficiam*, I will surely fail and miscarry; and the *World*, *Ego decipiam*, I will deceive them, and entice them; and *Satan*, *Ego eripiam*, I will snatch them and carry them away; and God saith, *Ego custodiam*, I will keep them, *I will never fail them nor forsake them*; and there lieth our safety and security.

It informeth us, that if any fall often, constantly, frequently, *Use 4.* easily, they have no interest in grace: 1 *John 3. 9.* He that is born of God, sinneth not; *ὁ γὰρ ἀγαπᾷ τὸν θεόν*, he makes not a trade of sin; that's the force of the phrase: Gods children slip often, but not with such a frequent constant readiness, into the same sin: As fair Meadows may be overflown, but *Marish* ground is drowned with the return of every Tyde; so are wicked men carried away with every return of the temptation; therefore he that liveth in a course of prophaness, worldness, drunkenness, his spot is not as the spot of Gods children. You are tryed by your constant course and walk, *Rom. 8. 1.* What's your road? what do you do constantly, easily, frequently? I except only those sins

which are of *usual incidence* and *sudden surreption*; as sudden stirrings of passion in a chollick temper and vanity of thoughts, and distractions in duties, &c. and yet for these a man should be the more *humble* and *watchful*; if they be not felt and striven against, and mourned for, 'tis a bad sign.

Use 5.

It provoketh us to get an interest in such a sure condition. Be not contented, 1. With *outward happiness*; things are worthy according to their duration: Nature hath such a fence of Gods Eternity, that the more *lasting* things are, it accounteth them the better: An *immortal Soul* must have an *eternal Good*: Now all things in the world are frail and pass away, therefore called *uncertain riches*, 1 Tim. 6. 18. 'tis uncertain whether we shall get them, and uncertain whether we shall keep them, and uncertain whether we shall live to enjoy them if they stay with us: All of this side grace is uncertain; these things are usually blasted in their *flower* and *beauty*; as *Herod* was stricken in the *midst* of all his *Royalty*: so that a man may *out-live his happiness*, which is the greatest misery; or at least it must terminate with death; there is no use of wealth in the other world. But now the *better part can never be taken from us*, Luke 10. 42. and by seeking that we may have other things *with a blessing*, Mat. 6. 33. 2. Rest not in *gifts*, they are for the *body* rather than the *person* that hath them; as many are *carnal*, and yet come behind in no gift; God useth them like *Negroes*, to dig in the mines of knowledge, that others may have the gold: *Judas* could cast out Devils, and yet afterward was cast out among Devils. See 1 Cor. 12. ult. the Apostle had discoursed largely of *gifts*, and then concludeth thus, *But yet I shew you a more excellent way*; and what's that? Grace that abideth and endureth for ever, as in the next Chapter. Many that have great abilities to pray, preach; discourse, yet fall away: According to the place which they sustain in the body, so they have great gifts, of knowledge, utterance, abilities to comfort, direct and instruct others, to answer doubts, to reason and argue for God, for conference and holy discourse, and yet fall foully; as those Heb. 6. 4. are said to be *partakers of the Holy Ghost*, that is, to have a great share of Church gifts. Nay this is not all, Gifts themselves wither and vanish when the bodily vigor is spent: *The glory of a man is as the flower of the grass*, 1 Pet. 1. 24. By the *glory of a man* is meant

meant whatever excellency we have by Nature, wit, knowledg, strength of natural parts, as well as wealth and riches : Many times we see the dry stalk remaineth when the flower is gone ; nothing but the gracious work of the Spirit will last for ever.

3. *Seeming and unsound grace* ; as * *false faith*, such as beginneth ^{* Hymeneus and} *in joy will end in trouble* ; it easeeth you for the present, but you ^{Alexander are} shall lye down in sorrow : *General probabilities, loose hopes, uncertain conjectures, vanishing apprehensions of comfort*, all these ^{laid o make} things soon come to nothing : The planting of true faith is ^{shipwrack of} *iron-faith*, that is, *blest* at first, but it leadeth to *true comfort* ; otherwise you ^{1 Tim. 1. 19. 20.} may look upon the Gospel with some kind of *delectation* for a while ; as thorns may blaze under the por, though they cannot keep in the fire : therefore do not *rest in tasting the good Word*, Heb. 6. 5. in some slight and transitory comfort. Again, there is *formal profession* : Many may begin in the Spirit, and end in the flesh, Gal. 3. 3. A man may seem to himself and to the Church of God to have true grace ; he may profess the truth, escape the *pollutions of the world*, that is, foul gross sins, yea and this not out of a *carnal aim*, but out of a *slight and insufficient touch* of the truth upon the Conscience, and yet fall away ; like the corn in the *stony ground*, that grew up, but had *no root*. But much more [Christians] will that form which is taken out of *private aims* fail and miscarry : God delighteth to take off the mark and disguise of an hypocrite, by *letting them fall into some scandalous sin*, or by *changing the times and posture* of affairs, or by *sending a storm* : Paint is soon washed off ; therefore rest not in these *outward and superficial changes*, till solid and substantial grace be wrought in you.

Is Comfort to Gods children ; *Grace* is sure, and the *priviled- Use 6.* ges of it are sure. *Grace* it self is sure, through your folly it may be *nigh unto death*, but cannot dye : This is the advantage of *spiritual comforts*, that they do not only *satisfie our desires*, but *secure us against our fears* : The Redeemed of the Lord have an *everlasting joy*, 1 *Isai.* 35. 10. Once in Christ, and for ever preserved in Christ, *Grace* would be little better then temporal things, if it did yield but a *temporary refreshing*. They weaken Christian comfort that make Believers walk with Christ like *Dancers upon a rope*, every moment in fear of breaking their necks. This is the comfort of a gracious heart, that as nothing shall a together

cut him off from enjoying God, so nothing shall utterly make him cease to love God. The children of God would be troubled if *grace* should fail, though their *priviledges* should not be cut off; you are sure of both. For as *grace* is sure, so are also *priviledges of grace*: This was figured under the Law; an Israelite could never wholly alienate his *Inheritance* and *Title to the Land*; *Levit. 25. 23. His Title to the Land shall not be cut off, nor sold for ever*: This was a Type of our spiritual Inheritance in Christ, which cannot be alienated from us; he might for a while pals it away, but it was to return again; so those that are made coheirs with Christ, are never dis-inherited: 'Tis true, we forfeit it by the *merit of our actions*, but God doth not take the advantage of every offence: 'Tis true, we lose the evidences that are in our keepings; peace of Conscience, and joy in the Holy Ghost; but the estate it self is undefeasible, and cannot be made away from us. Sometimes we are under a *kind of sequestration*, and there is a suspension of comfort and grace; as the Israelite might make away his inheritance for a time; but we shall recover possession again, though not by our selves, yet by our *Goel*, our kinsman, or him that is next of blood: As under the Law, if a person were not able to redeem the inheritance, the kinsman was to redeem it; so Jesus Christ, our kinsman after the flesh, he is our *Goel*, he interposeth by his merit, and reconcileth us to God. Well then, You see *grace* is kept, and the *priviledges of grace* are kept in Christ: But now because comforts are never prized but in *their season*, and men that have not been exercised in *spiritual conflicts*, nauseate these *sweet truths*, they know not what it is to be left to uncertainty, when troubles come like waves one in the neck of another; therefore let us see when this truth will be most sweet and seasonable. 1. In *great troubles*, when God seemeth to hide his face; Oh how sweet is it to hear him say, *I will not forsake thee till I have performed all that I promised thee, Gen. 28. 19.* all this shall better thy heart, and hasten thy glory. In times of distress we are apt to think that God hath cast us off, and wil never look after us more, though formerly we have had reall experiences of his grace: What a foolish creature is man to weaken his assurance when he should come to use it? to unravel all his hope and experiences in *times of trouble*, which is the onely season to make use of them.

them. 2. In the hour of temptation and hard conflicts with doubts and corruptions, when we are sensible of the power of sin, and how difficult it is to remove it out of the heart, we are apt to say as David after all his experiences, *I shall one day perish by the hand of Saul*, 1 Sam. 27. 1. and many times out of distrust give over the combat. Oh then remember now you are preserved in Christ, and that nothing shall separate: as Sarcarius came to Camerarius his wife, when she had been exercised with a long and tedious conflict, and read to her the latter end of the eighth of the Romans, she broke out in triumph, using Pauls words, *Nay, in all these things we are more than Conquerors*. Oh Christians, neither sin, nor Devil, nor world can divide you from Christ, for he did not only tread down Satan, but under your feet. 3. In times of great danger and desolation, either through error and persecution, as Saunders trembled to think of the fire; especially when others fall fearfully, who were before us in knowledge and profession of zeal and piety; when the first become last; when glorious Luminaries are eclipsed, and leave their orb and station; as the Martyrs were troubled to hear of the revolt of some great Scholars that had appeared for the Gospel: When Hymenius and Phileus, two eminent Professors, fell, there was a great shaking, 2 Tim. 2. 18. But the Foundation of the Lord standeth sure, &c. that's the comfort the Apostle opposeth in such a case. 4. In times of disheartning, because of the difficulties of Religion, when the use or means groweth troublesome: to quicken you in your Christian course, think of the unchangeableness of Gods love; all graces rise according to the proportion and measure of faith; loose hopes work in endeavours: 1 Cor. 9. 26. *I run not as one uncertain*. Those that ran a race gave over when one had far out-gone them, as being discouraged and without hope: When hope is broken, the edge of endeavours is blunted: Go on with confidence, you are assured of the issue, God will bless you and keep you to his everlasting Kingdom. 5. In the hour of death; when all things else fail you, God will not fail you; this is the last brunt; do but wait a little while, and you will find more behind then ever you enjoyed; death shall not separate: as Olevian comforted himself with that, * *Isai*, 54. 10. *The hills and mountains* * *Vile sculce-*
may depart, but my loving-kindness shall not depart from you; be- run in *Isai*, 54.
ing

ing in the Agonies of death, he said, *Sight is gone, speech and hearing is departing, feeling is almost gone, but the loving kindness of God will never depart.* The Lord give us such a confidence in this day, that we may dye glorying in the Preservation of our Redeemer.

VERSE II:

Mercy unto you, and Peace and Love be multiplied.

WE are now come to the third thing in the *Inscription*, and that is the form of *salutation*, delivered as all *Apostolical salutations* are, in the way of a prayer: In which we may observe, 1. The *matter* of the prayer, or blessings prayed for, which are three, *Mercy, Peace, and Love.* The *manner* or degree of enjoyment, [*be multiplied*]

I begin with the matter, or blessings prayed for: It will not be altogether un-*useful* to observe that diversity which is used in salutations. In the Old Testament *peace* was usually wished without any mention of *grace*; as *Psal.* 122. 8. *For my brethren and companions sake. I will say, Peace be within thee:* and *Dan.* 6. 25. *Peace be multiplied unto you.* But in the times of the Gospel *grace* being more fully delivered, that was also added and expressed in the forms of salutation: but yet in the times of the Gospel there is some variety and difference: Sometimes you shall meet with a salutation merely civil; as *James* 1. 1. *To the twelve Tribes χαίρειν, greeting:* 10 *Acts* 15. 23. which was the usual salutation among the Heathen: but most usually 'tis *grace and peace*; and in other places *grace, mercy and peace*, as 2 *John* 3. and 1 *Tim.* 1. 2. and here it differs from them all, for 'tis *mercy, peace and love*: And *Casaubon* observeth, that the Greek Fathers, if they wrote to a carnal man, they would wish him *grace*, but not *peace*; if to a godly man, they would wish him *grace and peace* too. To touch upon these things is sufficient. From these blessings mention'd in this place, I shall observe something in *general*, and then handle them *particularly* and apart.

First,

* Rom. 1. 17.

First, in the general Consideration you may observe,

1. *That spiritual blessings are the best blessings that we can wish* *Observat. 1.*
to our selves and others. The Apostles in their salutations do not
 wish temporal felicity but *spiritual grace* : Gods people pray for
 one another out of the *communion of the Spirit*, and for them-
 selves out of a *principle of the divine Nature*; and therefore they
 do not seek wealth and honour for themselves or one another,
 but increase of Gods Favour and Image. 'Tis true, *Nature* is al-
 lowed to speak in prayer, but *grace* must be heard first; our first
 and chiefest requests must be for *mercy, peace and love*, and then
 * *other things shall be added to us*; the way to be heard in other
 things, is first to beg for *grace*: *Psal. 21. 4. He asked life of*
thee, and thou gavest him length of dayes for ever: *Solomon* sought
wisdom, and together with it found *riches and honour* in great
 abundance. Well then, if thou prayest for thy self make a wise
 choyce, beg for spiritual blessings; so *David* prayeth, *Psal.*
106. 4. Remember me, O Lord, with the favour that thou bearest
unto thine own people; nothing less would content him then *Fa-*
vorites mercy: other blessings are dispensed out of common pity
 to the generality of men, but these are *mercies privilegiate*, and
 given to Favorites; now saith *David*, of this *mercy, Lord*; no
 common blessing would serve his turn: So *Psal. 119. 132. Look*
upon me, and be merciful to me, as thou usest to do to those that
love thy Name: Surely that which God giveth to his people, that's
 a better mercy than that which God giveth to his enemies. Again,
 these are mercies that cost God dearer; they flow to you in the
 Blood of his own Son: yea, they are mercies that are better in
 themselves; wealth and honour may become a *burden*, yea, *life*
is self may become a burden, but not *mercy*, not *grace*, not
peace of Conscience; and therefore they are *better then life*,
Psal. 63. 3. then wealth: then honour: none ever complained
 of too much mercy, of too much love of God: These are blef-
 sings that swallow up other miseries, yea, the loss of other blef-
 sings; grace with poverty 'tis a * *preferment*, peace of Consci- * *Jasmet. 9.*
 ence with outward troubles is an happy condition: If there be a
 † *flowing* of spiritual comforts, as there is an *ebbing* of outward
 comforts, we are not much wrong'd, therefore first seek these blef-
 sings. Again, if you pray, pray for others for grace in the first place,
 that's an evidence of *spiritual affection*: Carnal men wish such
 things

* Mat. 6. 33.
 ποσειδινασαι
 an additional
 supply, like
 paper and
 pack-thread,
 which is given
 over and above
 the bargain.

† 2 Cor. 1. 5.

thing to others, as they prize and affect themselves; so also do gracious men; and therefore their thoughts run more upon *mercy, peace and grace, then wealth and honour and greatness*. When a man sendeth a token to a friend, he would lend the best of the kind: These are the best mercies if you were to deal with God for your own Souls, you can ask no better: You may ask temporal things, for God loveth the prosperity of his Saints; but these special blessings should have the preferment in your wishes and desires of good to them, and then you are most likely to speed. Our Lord Christ in the 17. of *John*, commendeth the Colledge of the Apostles to the Father; and what doth he ask for him? dominion and worldly respect? Surely no, nothing but preservation from evil, and sanctification by the Truth; these are the chiefest Blessings we should look after as Christians.

Observat. 2. Observe again the aptness of the requests to the persons for whom he prayeth, *Those that are sanctified and called have still need of mercy, peace and love*. They need mercy, because we merit nothing of God, neither before grace received, nor afterward: the very continuance of our glory in Heaven is a fruit of mercy, not of merit; our obligation to free-grace never ceaseth. We need also more peace: there are degrees in assurance as well as faith; there is a temperate confidence, and these are ravishing delights, so that peace needs to be multiplied also. And then love, that being a grace in us, 'tis always in progress; in Heaven only 'tis compleat: Take it for love to God, there we cleave to him without distraction and weariness or satiety; God in communion is always fresh and new to the blessed spirits: And take it for love to the Saints, it's only perfect in Heaven, where there is no ignorance, pride, partialities and factions; where Luther and Zuinglius, Hooper and Ridley joyn in perfect consort.

Observat. 3. Again, Observe the aptness of these requests to the times wherein he prayed, when Religion was scandalized by loose Christians, and carnal doctrines were obtruded upon the Church; *In times of deflection from God, and wrong to the Truth, there is great need of mercy, peace and love*. Of mercy, that we may be kept from the snares of Satan: Christians, whence is it that any of us stand? that we are found faithful? 'Tis because we have obtained mercy: They would deceive if it were possible, the

the very *Elect*, *Mat. 24. 24.* Why is it not possible to deceive the *Elect* as well as others? of what mould are they made? wherein do they differ from other men? I answer, *Elective grace* and *mercy* interposeth; 'tis not for any power in themselves, but because Mercy hath singled them out, and chosen them for a distinct people unto God. And we need *peace* and inward consolations, that we may the better digest the misery of the times; and *love*, that we may be of *one mind*, and stand together in the defence of the Truth.

Again, Note the aptness of the blessings to the persons for whom he prayeth; *Here are three blessings that do more eminently and distinctly suit with every person of the Trinitie*: and I do the rather note it, because I find the Apostle elsewhere distinguish these blessings by their proper fountains, as *Rom. 1. 7. Grace to you, and peace from God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ*: Sort the blessings right, there is *grace* from the Father, and *peace* from Christ: So here is *mercy* from God the Father, who is called the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort, *2 Cor. 1. 3.* and *peace* from the Son, for *he is our peace Ephes. 2. 14.* and *love* from the Spirit; *Rom. 5. 5. The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given to us*. Thus you see every person concurrerh to our happiness with his distinct blessing.

In the next place: how aptly these blessings are suited among themselves; first *mercy*, then *peace*, and then *love*; *mercy* doth not differ much from that which is called *grace* in Pauls Epistles, only *grace* doth more respect the bounty of God, as *mercy* doth our want and need: By *mercy* then is meant the favour and good-will of God to miserable creatures; and *peace* signifieth all blessings inward and outward, as the fruits and effects of that favour and good-will; more especially *calmness* and *serenity* of Conscience, or a secure enjoying of the love of God, which is the root of spiritual prosperity: And then *love* fortifies signifieth Gods love to us; here I should rather take it for our love to God, and to the Brethren for Gods sake: So that *mercy* is the rise and spring of all, *peace* is the effect and fruit, and *love* is the return. He beginneth with *mercy*, for that is the fountain and beginning of all the good things which we enjoy; higher then *love* and *mercy* we cannot go, for Gods Love is the reason of it

self, *Deut.* 7. 7, 8. *Rom.* 9. 15. *Isai.* 45. 15. and we can deserve nothing at Gods hands but wrath and misery, and therefore we should still honour Mercy, and set the Crown upon Mercy's head (as further anon;) that which you give to Merit, you take from Mercy. Now the next thing is *peace*; mark the order still; without *mercy* and *grace* there can be no *true peace*; *Isai.* 57. 21. *There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked*; they say, *Peace, peace*, but my God doth not say so. Christ left his peace with his own Disciples, *John* 14. 27. and not as worldly and external peace is, i.e. in the happiness of which both good and bad are concerned; that is *general*, but this is *proper*, confined with the Conscience of him that enjoyeth it, and given to the godly: 'Tis the Lords method to pour in first the oyl of *grace*, and then the oyl of *gladness*: Alas, the peace of a wicked man 'tis but a *frisk* or *fit* of joy, whilest Conscience, Gods Watchman, is napping: *stolen waters and bread eaten in secret* *Prov.* 9. 17. The way to true *peace* is to apply your selves to God for *mercy*, to be accepted in Christ, to be renewed according to the Image of Christ; otherwise sin and guilt will create fears and troubles. Again, the last thing is *love*; great *privileges* require *answerable duty*; *Mercy* and *peace* need another grace, and that's *love*: 'Tis gods gift as well as the rest, we have *graces* from God as well as *privileges*, and therefore he beggeth *love* as well as *mercy* and *peace*; but it must be *our act*, though we have the *grace* from above: We would all have *mercy* and *peace*, but we are not so zealous to have *love* kindled in our hearts: *Mercy, peace*, all this runneth downward, and respects our *interest*, but *love*, that mounteth upward, and respects God himself. Certainly they have no interest in *mercy*, and were never acquainted with *true peace*, that do not find their hearts inflamed with *love to God*, and a zeal for his glory; that as he hath ordered all things for our *profit*, so we may order and refer all things to his *glory* and *honour*. *Mercy* runneth down from God, and begets *peace of Conscience*, for *peace of Conscience* is nothing else but a solid taste of Gods *mercy*; and *peace of Conscience* begets *love*, by which we clasp about God again; for *love* is nothing else but a reverberation or bearing back of Gods blessing upon himself, or a return of duty in the sense of *mercy*: * so that God is at the be-

ginning

* So in the
Angels Song,
Luke 2. 19.
Glory, Peace
and good will.
All comes
from God will
that's the first
cause, as Gods
glory is the
last end. Under
the Law the
first, and the
seventh were the
Lords; the
beginning and
ending are his.

ginning and ending, and either way is the utmost boundary of the Soul; all things are *from him* and *to him*.

Secondly, Let me handle them particularly and apart; and first *Mercy*, which is *the rise and cause of all the good we have from God*: The Lord would dispense blessings in such a way as might beat down *despair* and *carnal confidence*: Man hath need of mercy, but *deserveth none*: *Despair* would keep us from God, and *carnal confidence* robbeth him of his glory; therefore as the Lord would not have *flesh to glory*, so neither to be *cut off from all hope*: *Mercy* saveth both; we need not flye the sight of God, there is *mercy with him why he should be feared*, *Psal.* 130. 7. *False worship*s are supported by *terror*; but God's, that reach the best ricle to the heart, will gain it by *love* and *offers of mercy*. And we have no reason to ascribe any thing to our selves, since *Mercy* doth all in the Court of Heaven, and not *Justice*: If you reckon upon a *debt*, you are sure to mis: 'Tis a part of Gods Supremacy, that all his blessings should come as a *gift*; that he should act freely, and entertain us as a *King*, not as an *Host*: *Merit* taketh off something of his Royalty and supreme Majesty. Touching the Mercy of God, give me leave to give you a few Observations.

I. * 'Tis the aim of the whole Scripture to represent God *merciful*: 'Tis true, God is infinitely *just*, as well as infinitely *merciful*; but he delighteth in *gracious discoveries* of himself to the creature; he counteth it *his glory*. *Moses* was earnest with God to shew him his Glory, and then God proclaimeth his Name, *Exod.* 34. 5, 6. *The Lord, the Lord, merciful and gracious long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin, &c.* In this description there is more spoken of his *Mercy*, then of his *Justice*; and first his *Mercy* is described, and then his *Justice*; for *Justice* is only added to invite men to take hold of his *Mercy*, and to shew that *Justice* is never exercised but in avenging the quarrel of *abused Mercy*. So he is called a *God of pardon*, *Nehem.* 9. 17. as if wholly made up of *sweetness*. So 2 *Cor.* 1. 3. he is called * *Father of mercies*, and *God of all consolations*; He is a *just God*, but he is not called the *Father of Justice*: *Mercy* is natural to him; he counteth it as the proper fruit and product of the divine Essence.

* Id agit tota Scriptura ut credamus Deum esse misericordem. Luther.

* Πατήρ ἐλεῶν
ἰησοῦς.

2. *Mercy is represented as his delight and pleasure*: So *Micah* 7. 18. *Mercy pleaseth him*: 'Tis an act exercised with complacency. Judgment is called his *strange work*, *Isai* 28. 21. God loveth to bless and protect; to *destroy* is not suitable to his disposition; 'tis a thing that he is forced to. *Punitive acts* in the representations of the Word are more against his bowels, drawn and * extorted from him; as *Jer.* 44. 22. *The Lord could no longer bear because of your doings*: their sins were so clamorous, that they would not let God be quiet; he would bear no longer, unless they would make an *Idol* of him. But now all acts of grace and favour are exercised with delight; *I will rejoyce over them to do them good*, *Jer.* 32. 41. 'Tis as pleasing to God to do it, as 'tis to us to receive it. The Scripture, after the manner of men, doth often represent a Conflict in the Attributes about sinners; and if Mercy get the upper-hand, 'tis always with joy and triumph; *Jam.* 2. 13. *Mercy rejoyceth over Judgment*: but if he be compelled to strike, and Justice must be exercised, the Scriptures represent a reluctance in his bowels; *Lam.* 3. 33: *He doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men*; in the original, *from his heart*; but is like a Father, with a rod in his hand, and tears in his eyes.

3. *The Scripture representeth God as exercising mercy, though with some present disadvantage to his Glory*: As mercy to the *Ninivites*, though the credit of his Messias lay at stake; *Niniveh shall be destroyed in forty days*; yet God spared it; and therefore *Jonah* in a pet challengeth him for it; *Jon.* 4. 2. *Lord, was not this my saying when I was in my Country? for I knew that thou wert a gracious God*: As if he said, I knew 'twould come to this, that the *Prophets of Israel* should be disgraced before the men of *Niniveh*; and to threaten Judgments in his Name, is to expose our selves to derision; when we have done our errand, free grace will make us all *liars*: To this effect did he expostulate with God. God might easily destroy sinners with much honour to himself; but he is *long-suffering*, even when his patience for a while seemeth to impair the revenues of Heaven. The World suspects his Being, the Saints quarrel at his Justice and question his Love, and all because the wicked are prosperous, and God keepeth silence. The great stumbling block at which most have dashed the foot of their faith, is the suspension of due Judgments.

* *Misericordia suadet ut parcatur, peccatorum clamor cogit ut puniam.* Solv.

Judgments. What was the effects of his patience to them of *Affria* and *Babylon*? The Lord himself telleth you, *Isai. 52. 5. My Name every day is blasphemed*; that was all he got by it: his people suffered in person, and God himself in his reputation; all that he got was blasphemies, and reproaches, and injuries. So *Psal. 50. 21. I kept silence, and thou thoughtest that I was every way like thy self*; that was the effect; gross conceits of his Glory and Essence: When Judgments are quick and speedy, the World is under greater awe, the confidence of the Sinners is strengthened and supported, and Gods honour is more clear and untainted; yet with all these disadvantages to his Glory (if we may speak so) God forbearth: Certainly his heart is not set upon the honour of his Mercy, that God will glorify in, though other Attributes seem to suffer loss.

4. *The Scriptures speak much of his readiness to receive returning sinners*: Though they have done infinite wrong to his Holiness, yet upon repentance, and as soon as they begin to submit, Mercy embraceth and huggeth them, as if there had been no breach; *Luk. 15. 20. I will go to my Father, and the Father ran to meet him*: So *Isai. 65. 20. Before they call, &c. So Psal. 32. 5. I said, and thou forgavest, &c. So Jer. 31. 17. With zo. I have heard Ephraim bemoaning himself, &c. and presently, Oh my dear and pleasant child. The first returnings of the creature work upon the bowels of Mercy; Love's pace is very swift, it runneth to meet a returning sinner: Christ cometh skipping over the Mountains, *Cant. 2. 8. He thinketh that he can never be soon enough with us*: He would fain have the company of sinners, and therefore meeteth them mere then half way: when we but conceive a purpose, we presently receive the fruit of his early mercies.*

5. *God doth not only admit them to come, but of his own accord inviteth them that are slack and backward. The Scriptures do every where record the intreaties of God*: he draweth us with cords of Love; cords that are woven and spun out of Christs heart and bowels; In one place thus, *Cant. 4. 8. Come away from Lebanon, my Sister, my Spouse, from the Lions dens from the mountains of Leopards*: Christs love is hot and burning, he thinketh we tarry too long from his embrace. So *Cant. 5. 2. Open to me my Sister, my Spouse, &c. Christ stands begging*

for entrance: *Lost man, do but suffer me to save thee; poor sinner, suffer me to love thee*: These are the charms of Gospel Rhetoric! So *Isai. 49. Hearken to me, and attend to the words of my mouth, &c.* Oh sinners, you will not hearken to me for the good of your Souls! You see none singeth so sweetly as the *Bird of Paradise*, the *Turtle* that chirpeth upon the *Churches hedges*, that he may *cluck* sinners to himself: The Scripture is full of such an *holy witch-craft*, such passionate charms, to entice Souls to their happiness.

6. *They that constantly refuse the offers of his grace, are born with for a long time*: *Rom. 9. 22. πολλὰ μακροθύμια. He endured with much long-suffering, &c.* All may bleis God for *patience*; they owe an *heavy debt* to divine Justice, yet 'tis a long time ere God putteth the Bond in suit; though they dare him to his face, yet they walk up and down without the arrest of vengeance; He beareth with them years and years after a thousand and a thousand affronts, from their *cradles* to their *graves*: When they were *green wood*, they were fuel fit enough for *divine wrath*. Oh consider, there can be no cause of this but his *mercy* to his *worst creatures* 'Tis not out of any delight in sin, for he is *holy*, and cannot endure to look upon it, *Hab. 2. 13. Of purer eyes, &c.* 'tis not out of any stupid neglect, He is *just*, and will not clear the guilty, *Exod. 34. 7.* 'tis not out of any ignorance, He telleth man his thoughts; not for want of power to men forbear, *The sons of Zeruiah may be too hard for them*; but *1 Sam. 24. 19. If any man findeth this enemy, will he let him go well away?* When they are in our power, we satisfy our wrath with revenge to the full: But now God *upholdeth all things by the word of his Power*; He can in a minute speak us into nothing: As the impression of a Seal upon the water dependeth upon the Seal, if the Seal be taken away the impression vanisheth; So do our being depend upon *Providential influence and supportation*: If God should withdraw the word of his Power, we should soon vanish and disappear; Therefore 'tis not for want of Power, but merely out of Mercy that we are forborn: How may we wonder at this! We are of eager and tri: spirits, sharp-set upon revenge: Could we have put up so many refusals of Love? such despights done to Mercy? such wrongs, such grievings of Spirit, and yet have contained? The Disciples themselves

selves, though holy men, when they were sensible of being slighted in the Village of *Samaria*, called for fire from heaven, *Luke 9. 54.* Certainly we could not endure such a contradiction of sinners: If Thunder-bolts were in our power, we should soon kindle a burning, and turn the World into smoke and desolation.

7. 'Tis not only the aim of the *Word*, but of *Providence*, and of all the Dispensations of God to the Creature, to represent him merciful. The whole World is a great *Volume*, written within and without with Characters and Lines of Mercy: *Psal. 145. 7. His mercy is over all his works*; Every creature bears the marks and pains of divine Goodness and bounty. Once more, The World is a great *Theatre and Stage* whereon *Mercy* hath been acting its part for these six thousand years: *Justice* is to have a *solemn Triumph* at the last day. Now and then God hath kept a *petty Sessions*, and given us occasion to say, *Verily there is a God that judgeth the world*, as well as *preserveth the world*; But the greatest part that hath been acted upon the *Theatre* of the World, is *Mercy*; as you will easily see, if you consider, 1. *The black lines of Providence*: If God threaten, 'tis that he may not punish; if he punish, 'tis that he may not punish for ever. In the sadder *Providences*, though there be misery at the top, yet there is *mercy* at the bottom. Many times God threateneth, but 'tis to reclaim; though he doth * not change his counsel, yet he doth often change his sentence, *Jer. 18*
 7. 8. When the message is nothing but *plucking up and pulling down*, Free grace cometh in with a sudden rescue, and prevents the execution. *Mercy* you see is forced to use all methods, and to speak in the *Language of Justice*; that men may be capable to receive it. Sometimes God punisheth, but with what aim? that he may not for ever punish: 'Tis we that make punishment to be a *pledge* of eternal damnation; in its own aim 'tis a *prevention*; and so it proveth so to the Elect; *We are judged of the Lord, that we may not be condemned of the world*, *1 Cor. 11. 32.* So *Hosea 2. 6. I will hedge up her way with thorns, &c.* We should soon grow weary, and drowned in carnall businesses and projects, if God did not come now and then, and blast our enterprizes, and make us see our folly. We are puffed up, and God pricketh the bladder, *2 Cor. 12. 7.* How sweet is this,
 the

* *Miser sententiam, sed non decretum.*
Bradyardine.

when in the midst of Judgement God remembereth Mercy? Yea the very executions of Justice are found to be one of the methods of Mercy. In the middle of the first Curse God dropped out a promise of the blessed Seed; So often Mercy overtaketh a Judgement; and maketh it cease in the mid way. Look as there was a conflict between the twins in Tamars womb, Zarah did put out the hand, but Pharez broke out first; So is there between Gods Mercy and Justice; Justice puts out the hand in a threatening, or some beginning of a judgement, but Mercy gets the start, and breaketh out first. 2. Consider the *white lines* of Providence: He intreateth that he may do us good, and doth us good, that he may do us good for ever. For his intreaties: 'Tis not duty to much that is in the bottom of the Exhortation, as Mercy: To glorifie Mercy is the last aim of God in this eternal Purpose: He hath accepted us in the beloved, to the praise of his glorious grace, Ephes. 1. 6. God receiveth no profit; he intreateth us not that he may be happy, but that he may be liberal: See Prov. 9. 12. If thou be wise, thou shalt be wise for thy self, but if thou scornest, thou alone shalt bear it: God dealeth with us as earnestly, as continually, as if the profit were his own, but it wholly redoundeth to us. Again, He doth us good that he may do us good for ever: He trusteth us with Mammon, to prepare us for the true riches; and with the riches of grace, to prepare us for glory. Look as men when they would put precious liquor into a vessel, first try it with water to see whether it leaketh or not: so doth God try us with common mercies; he giveth us an estate in the world, that being moved with his goodness, we may look after an estate in the Covenant, and an interest in Christ; and so fit us for Heaven. 'Tis our wretchedness to make our table a snare, and our welfare a trap: As the Sea turneth all that it receiveth into salt water, the flesh Streaks the influences of the Heavens, &c. to do Carnal men assimilate and corrupt their comforts, and by little and little all their blessings are cursed; so Mercy can bear any thing but a constant abuse and neglect of it self: Certainly Gods revealed Will is otherwise; that which cometh from God, should lead us to God: See Rom. 2. 4, 5.

8. Consider in how many notions Mercy is represented to us: Gods Mercy hath many Names; a distinct consideration of the n
yieldeth

yieldeth an advantage in believing: for though they express the same thing, yet every notion begetteth a *fresh thought*, by which Mercy is more taken abroad in the view of Confidence: This is that *pouring out of Gods Name*, spoken of Cant. 1. 3. Ointment in the Box doth not yield such a fragrantcy as when 'tis *poured out*; and Spices do not give forth their smell till they are chafed. Nothing is more conducive to beget a truth, than *distinct thoughts* and *conceptions* of Gods Mercy. Let us take notice of some places where 'tis set forth: See Psal. 103. 8. *The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy*: The expression is diversified; and I note it the rather, because in other places the same notions of Mercy are punctually expressed: see Nehem. 9: 17. so Psal. 145. 8. and in divers other places; chiefly see that Exod. 34. 7. and you will find that this is the very description which God hath given of himself. Now when doth the Spirit of God aim at in this express *enumeration* and *accumulation* of names of Mercy, but to give us an help in meditation, and that our thoughts may be more distinct. 1. The first notion is *Mercy*, which is *an Attribute whereby God inclineth to succour them that are in misery*: 'Tis an Attribute that merely respecteth the creature: The love and knowledge of God first falleth upon himself; but Mercy is only *transient*, and possetheth out to the creatures: God *knoweth* himself, *loveth* himself, but he is not *merciful* to himself. And then it respecteth the creatures in misery; for misery is Mercy's only motive: Justice seeketh a *fit object*, but Mercy a *fit occasion*; Justice requirerh desert, but Mercy only want and need. 2. The next notion is *Grace*, which noteth the *free bounty* of God, and excludeth all merit of the creature: Grace doth all *gratis*, * *freely*, * Rom. 1. 24. though there be no precedent obligation, or debt, or hope of recompence, whereby any thing may accrue to himself; on y that it may be well with the creature. Gods external motive is our misery, his internal motive is his own grace and elective love: Am I *worthy*? there is *mercy*; Am I *unworthy*? there is *grace*. *Mercy* reflects us as we are in our selves worthy of condemnation. Grace as compared with others not elected: The ultimate reason of the choyce is Gods grace. The Angels that never sin'd are saved merely out of grace; but men that were once miserable, are saved not only out of grace, but also out of *mercy*. 3. The next notion is *long-suffering*,

* Joel 2. 12.
* Nah 4. 2.

* Nisi expectaret impium non inveniret quem glorificaret pium, Aug.

suffering, or slowness to anger: The Lord is not easily overcome by the wrongs or sins of the creature, but easily overcometh them by his own patience and goodness: He doth not only pity our misery, that's mercy; and do us good for nothing, that's grace; but beareth long with our infirmities. * Alas, if God were as short and swift in the executions of revenge as men are, God must create another World to raise up seed to Christ: If he did not wait upon sinners, there would be none made Saints: We provoked him to cut us off long since, but wrath is not easily heightened into rage, and therefore he waiteth that he may be gracious, *Isai.* 30. 18. 4. Kindness or bounty, plenteous in goodness; **B E R A B C H E S I D**: Gods communications of his grace to the creature are every way rich and full: You may say, God is merciful, gracious, patient. But will he be thus to me? Yes, he is plenteous in goodness, kind and communicative; *Psal.* 119. 68. *Thou art good and dost good*; therefore David goeth to him for Grace. Well then, study Gods Name, and Answer all your discouragements out of the Descriptions of his Mercy.

* As they said, We have heard that the Kings of Israel are merciful Kings &c.

9. Consider your own experiences: We have not * only heard that God is merciful, but we have known it: All men may speak of patience, and common mercy, and outward deliverances; but few improve them to a spiritual use and purpose. 1. Consider Gods patience; How long hath he waited for your Conversion? and he that hath spared you can save you. 'Tis said, *The wages of sin is death, Rom. 6. 23.* the word implyeth that God is bound to pay it by virtue of an implicate bargain, and agreement between him and the creature: But as yet the hand of God hath not found you out; you are indebted to Justice, but Mercy stoppeth the arrest of Vengeance: Many others have been taken away in their sins, by a sudden arrow and dart from Heaven; Vengeance hath trodden upon the heel of sin; As *Zimri* and *Cosbi* unloaded their lusts and their lives together; The *Angels* for an aspiring thought were turned out of Heaven; *Gehazi* was blasted with Leprosy just upon his lye; and *Lois wife* turned into a stone for a look, a glance upon *Sodom*; and *Herod* smitten with lice in the midst of his pomp and vain-glory: and some have perished in the mid-way, *Psal.* 2. in the very heat of some carnal and wicked pursuit; God can do the like to you: therefore

reason

reason thus; If Mercy would not *save* me, why hath Mercy *spared* me? God might have sued out the Bond long since; what is the meaning of the dispensation? Is God *weak* or *unjust*? or hath he a mind to be gracious? Surely he would not have spared me all this while, if he had not a mind to save my Soul. Such reasonings as these many times give us the first encouragement to apply our selves to God: Wicked men like Spiders draw other conclusions, *Psal.* 50. 21. *But should not his patience, &c.* *Rom.* 2. 4. 2: Consider *Gods goodness*, in giving thee food, and clothing, and honour, and gladness of heart, and all this without thy desert; say, Certainly all these benefits are but *so many baits* to catch my Soul; I see the Sun riseth every day with a fresh countenance, and shineth upon the fields of *just and unjust*; to what purpose? but to shew that God is gracious without hire: This bodily Sun is but an *obscure type* of the *Sun of Righteousness*, that is willing to display his beams and wings cover a poor languishing Soul. Common mercies are the *tastes* of Gods love while you are sinners, and the common fruits of Christs death, that you may be invited to come for more: Why hath he given me the *unrighteous Mammon*, but that I may look after the *true Riches*? What a vile unthankful heart should I have, if I should be contented with *Mammon* without *Christ*? and be like *Judas*, with the *bag* in my hand, and the *Devil* in my heart? Gods children are wont to make these gifts a *step* to higher dispensations: they know God, like the good householder, bringeth forth *the best at last*; therefore they must have something above and beyond all these things: *Common hearts* are contented with *common mercies*; but they are still waiting when the *Master of the Feast* will bid them sit higher: I may have this and be damned; Where are the arguments of his special Love? 3: Consider *deliverances from imminent dangers*: Then the Curse began to seize upon you; but God snatched you out of the fire like *brands out of the burning*, *Amos* 4. 11. or like a *debtor* that escapeth out of the Sergeants hands. Every *deliverance* is a *temporary pardon*: See *Psal.* 78. 38. *Then he being full of compassion, forgave their iniquity, and destroyed them not*; the meaning is, *respected Vengeance*, as appeareth by the Context. So *Mat.* 18. 32. *He forgave them the debt*; yet 'twas after required; the meaning is, *spared* them for the present. Thus

when God taketh you out of the teeth and jaws of Wrath, when you are delivered out of sickness and apparent danger, you have a *reprieve* or a *temporary pardon*. Oh if you had dyed, you had dyed in your sins, and so been eternally miserable: If the Lord had taken the present advantage, you had been howling a sad note among the *screech-owls of darkness*; For ever blessed be that Mercy that made a rescue:

10. Consider *Gods invitations*: Mercy pointeth and beckneth to thee to come and be saved: How many means hath God used to call thee to himself? Every good motion is a *call*; every Preacher a *messenger* sent from Heaven to invite thee to Christ; every Sermon a *new summons*: Plead with thy self, Though God hath not *drawn* me, yet he hath *warned* me. The *Elect* have no more favour in the *general means* than thou hast: Though Gods grace be limited by the pleasure of his Wisdom, yet thou hast a *fair warrant* and *encouragement*, and every way as good a ground to come to Christ as others have; *Whosoever, &c.* John 6. 37. When the Gospel doth not exclude me, why should I exclude my self? Doubts that God will not accept me if I come, are but foolish jealousies without a cause. But 'tis time to leave off this *meditation upon Gods mercy*, which hath carried me out so far, and to come to the Uses.

Use 1.

It informeth us, that those that would apply themselves to God, must make *mercy* their only *plea* and *claim*: Returning sinners have this form put into their mouths, *Hosea 14. 2. Take away all iniquity, receive us graciously*: Lord, we desire to be entertained by Mercy, to have our suits dispatched by Mercy. So David professeth that he had no other claim, *Psal. 13. 5. I have trusted in thy Mercy*: * Upon which *Chrysostom* sweetly Observat aliter glosseth; *If any others have any thing to alledge, let them plead it*; Lord, I have but one thing to say, one thing to plead, one thing upon which I cast all my hopes, and that is thy Mercy. So mult-
tationibus you come to the Throne of Grace; Lord, my plea is *mercy*, all
quando cum ho- the comfort I expect to receive is from *mercy*. The Apostle I
minibus sui fi- remember maketh a challenge, *Rom. 11. 35. Who hath first given*
milibus rixat- him, and it shall be recompenced to him again? Is there any man
tur, aliter in that can enter this plea, *This is due to me*? Lord give me what
meditationibus thou owest, I desire no more; let me have no blessing till I do
quando coram deserve it. † *Merit-mongers* are best confuted by experience;

Let

Let them use the same plea in their *prayers*, which they do in *scientiam suam* their *disputes*; let them say, Give me not eternal life till I de- *quasi causa di-*
 serve it at thy hand; let them dispute thus with God, or with their *centia est, &c.*
 own Consciences, when they are in the agonies of death, or un- *Davenport de*
 der the horrors of the Lord's wrath. Surely men that cry up *Justitiam.*
 the merit of Works, are men of little spiritual experience, and
 seldom look into their own Consciences: Dare they plead thus
 with God in their agonies and horrors? The best claim Gods * *Et si non sic*
 dearest servants can make, is *mercy*. *Possidius* in the life of *vixi ut posset*
Austin reporteth of *Ambrose*, when he was about to dye, he inter- *vi-*
 said thus, * *Though I have not lived so that I should be ashamed to, &c. sed quia*
to live among you; yet am I not afraid to dye, not that I have *bonum domi-*
lived well, but because I have a good and gracious Master. *nam habeo.*
Possidius in
 hath still been the ground of the Saints confidence. *vita August.*

It exhorteth us to use this encouragement to bring our Souls
 into the presence of God: Think of the mercies of God; The
 vile abuse of this Doctrine hath brought a suspicion and preju-
 dice upon it: but children must not refuse their bread because
 Dogs catch at it. When *Benhadad* was dejected, and in dan-
 ger not onely of losing his Kingdom, but his life, his servants
 comforted him with this same, *1 Kings 20. 31. We have heard*
that the Kings of Israel are merciful Kings. You have heard
 how the God of Israel delighteth in mercy: When you come
 for mercy, you speak to his very bowels. You shall read in a
Sam. 14. 1. that when *Joab* perceived the Kings heart was to *Ab-*
salom, then he setteth the woman of *Tekoa* a begging: The
 Kings heart is to shew mercy; he hath * *sworn*, that he hath no
 pleasure in thy destruction; therefore take courage and come to
 him: He hath sent Christ to you, as a pledge of his good-will
 and mercy, why will you not come to him? He that had Love
 enough to give us Christ, hath Bowels enough to give us pardon,
 and Bounty enough to give us Heaven, and what ever we stand in
 need of: Fear not his Justice, * *Justice* and *Mercy* are made * *Rom. 3. 25,*
 friends, Christ hath taken up the quarrel between them, so that *26.* and
 nothing hindreth but that God may act according to the natural *John 1. 9.*
 inclination of his own grace. And let not the multitude of your
 sins discourage you, The free gift is of many offences to Justifica-
 tion *Rom. 5. 16.* Take it for the offences of many persons (as
 the Context teacheth to carry it) and let it be an encouragement to
 think

think of the multiplied instances of Mercy, and how many monuments of free-grace we shall see when we come to Heaven, and that all this while mercy is not tyred. Or take it for the many offences of the same person, and still 'tis an encouragement, that Mercy can so often bear with our vanity and folly, and not only pardon several sorts of sin, but frequent relapses into the same sin; He will multiply to pardon, *Isai. 55. 7.* If the Soul still draw back, and be under discouragement, consider your own need: If the Lord were never so tenacious, and hard to be intreated, yet such is your need, that you should follow him with unceasing complaints. 'Tis blasphemy to wrong his mercy by lessening thoughts: But grant the sinner his supposition, yet you should be instant, and try what he will do for importunities sake: See *Luke 11. 8.* *Διά τὴν ἀνάδικιαν* and *Luke 18. 5.* *Ὡς μὴ ὑποχωρῇ καὶ ὁ κ.* In those Parables there is a kind of condescension and yielding to our unbelief; as if the Lord had said, If you will not believe all this that is said concerning my mercy, yet your want is great, that is enough to make you earnest and frequent in your addresses to me; come and see what I will do for your importunity; the unjust Judge was moved with the widows clamour be it as you imagine, that I have no bowels for creatures miseries, nor ears for their requests, which yet is a blasphemy confuted by every object in the world, the *young Ravens will tell you otherwise: but be it so, you are undone if I be not merciful; see what I will do for constant asking. Upon all these encouragements be perswaded to make an essay: Faith at first standeth but upon one weak foot; † Who knoweth but that God will be gracious? There is encouragement enough to venture, though we do not know what will come of it: Take up a resolution to make tryal; you will find better welcome then you can expect; God desires to exercise mercy, as much as you desire to feel it:

* Job 38. 41.

Matth. 6. 26.

Luke 12. 24.

† Jonah 3: 10

Joel 2. 14.

Use 3.

* Ephes. 2. 4.

1 Tim. 1. 13.

Gen. 33. 6.

Phil. 2. 27.

It presseth us in all our enjoyments to acknowledge Mercy:

* The Saints are wont to do so: 'Tis good to refer all things to their head and proper fountain: Every thing that we enjoy is the fruit of Mercy, especially saving grace. 'Tis a sure sign a man hath received no benefit by grace, if his heart be not stirred up to praise it. We have cause to praise God for his mercy above the Angels; I mean not only the bad Angels, with whom

God

God entred not into a Treaty, he dealt with them in *justice*, and not in *mercy*; but even the good *Angels*, in some respects we have more cause to bless God then they have: Gratitude respecteth the *freeness* and *graciousness* in giving, rather then the *greatness* of the benefit. God was bountifull to the Angels in making them such excellent creatures out of nothing; but he is merciful to us, notwithstanding the demerit of our *sins*. There was no let in his doing good to the Angels, goodness floweth out freely from an *holy God* to *righteous creatures*; but wronged Justice interposed, and put in a bar against us; so that his *Justice* must be satisfied, before *Mercy* can have a free course. We are a generation of sinful men, the wretched off-spring of fallen *Adam*; we had forsaken God, and cast him off, which the Angels had not; and therefore though they have a large experience of Gods goodness, yet they wonder at the grace theyved to us, 1 *Pet.* 1. 12. But now much more is this mercy to be acknowledged, if we consider the difference between us and other men, who it may be excelled us in *moral accomplishments*; but God hath passed them by, choosing us poor things of nought, poor *base creatures*, that the glory might entirely redound to his own grace. But especially should this Mercy affect us, when it hath made a distinction between us and others that were involved in the same guilt; when *one is taken*, and *another left*; as the *bad thief* went to his own place, when the *good thief* was taken to *Paradise*; and many of Gods Elect were as deep in *sin* as those in *Hell*: I say, in all such cases we should still be crying out, *Mercy, mercy*; for certainly *Justice* could make no such distinction; it awardeth a like punishment to all that are found in a like crime; but Gods infinite and eternal mercy only maketh the difference.

*Tis *Caution*; Do not wrong *Grace* and *Mercy*, if it be the cause of all the good which we enjoy: this is to close up the Fountain, and to make *Mercy* our *Enemy*; and if *Mercy* be our *Enemy*, who shall plead for us? If *Mercy* be an *Accuser*, where shall we get an *Advocate*? But how do we wrong *Grace*? I answer, Partly by neglecting the offers of it, when you make God speak in vain, 2 *Cor.* 5. 2. 'Tis a great affront we put upon God, to despise him, when he speaketh to us in the *still voice*, and all the *moings* and *pleadings* of *Mercy* do not move to look after

* So these in Matthew did not deny, but make excuse, *μαρτυροῦντες*, *Μαθ. 23. 5.* They would not take it in to their care and thoughts. See Rom. 6. 2c.

after our salvation; though you do not *despise*, there is danger in bars: * *neglect*, *Heb. 2. 3.* When all the *charms* of Mercy do no more work with you, then a story of *golden Mountains*, or *Rubies* and *Diamonds* fall from Heaven in a *night dream*; this neglect argueth a greater *suspicion* and *distrust* of Gods mercy, then *doubts* and *troubles* of Conscience do; Mercy speaketh to them, and they do not think the *message* worth the *hearing* or *regarding*. Again, You wrong grace by *refusing* it out of *legal desjection*, for by this means you *straiten* the *riches*, and *darken* the *glory* of it; as if there were not more in grace then there is in tin; or as if an *Emperors Revenue* could not discharge a *beggers debt*: The Prodigal could say, there was *bread enough* in his *Fathers house*: If we perish, 'tis not for *want* of *mercy*, but for *want* of *faith*. grace is Gods treasure; he is *rich* in *mercy*, *Ephes. 2. 4.* As far as we *straiten* grace, we make him a *poor* God. Again, We wrong Grace and Mercy by *intercepting* the *glory* of it. 'Tis the greatest *sacrilege* that can be, to rob God of his *Glory*, especially of the *glory* of his *Grace*; for that's his *great aim* in all his *transactions* with man, to make his *Grace* and *Mercy* *glorious*, see *Ephes. 1. 6.* Now when you think God accepteth you rather then others for *some worth* and *good qualities* that he seeth in you more then others; it may be in this light of the Gospel which we now enjoy such thoughts are not *expressed*, but * if they *lurk secretly* in the heart, you think God *foresees* you would *bring him more glory*; you take the *Crown* from *Grace's* head, and put it upon your own. So also you *wrong* grace when you ascribe any thing to your *power* and *strength*: as *Joab* sent for *David* to take the honour of winning *Rabbath*, *2 Sam. 12. 28.* *Lest I take the City, and it be called after my own name*: So send for God to take the honour; *Not I, but grace*, *1 Cor. 15. 10.* Throw the *Crown* at *Grace's* feet: The industrious servant said, *Thy pound hath gained ten pounds*, *Luke 19. 16.* not *my industry*; but *thy pound*. Once more, We wrong Grace by *turning* it into *want* *innests*; see *vers. 4.* 'tis made there to be a *heavy charge* and *black note*; when men presume on *Grace*, and use it one y as a *dung cart* to carry away their filth; Grace must bear all, and pardon all: as riotous Children that have a rich Father care not how they spend, his Estate shall pay for all. 'Tis a mighty wrong to Grace, this, when you make it pliable to such vile purposes,

* *Deut. 9. 4.*

poles, and father the *bastards* of your own carnal hearts upon Gospel encouragements: 'Tis the *Devils Covenant*, not Gods, when you think you may live as you list, be at your own dispose, and *mercy* shall be at your beck, and you shall have comfort when you please, and that you may sin freely because God pardoneth freely, as if Mercy gave you a *privilege* and *liberty* to sin. In short, If a man slackens any part of his duty for Mercy's sake, or lets loose the reins to vile affections with more freedom, upon the presumption that God will not be *rigorous*, he wrongeth grace exceedingly; I say, if he grow more *careless*, *secure*, *negligent*, not so *constant* in duty, not so *watchful* and *strict* in conversation, or abateth ought of his humiliation for sin, he is a *spider* that sucketh poyson out of this flower. Lastly, We wrong Grace by *slighting* it *after a taste*: At first coming to Christ, we make an *essay* and *trial*, and usually then God giveth us *a taste* to engage to look for more: Now *after trial* * 1 Pet. 2. 3. you are not satisfied, but return to your sinful courses again; Heb. 2. 4, 5, 6. and so do as it were proclaim to the World that you found carnal comforts and pleasures to be better then communion with God: This is but the *interpretation* of your *Apostacy*. The whole aim of the Word is to persuade us to make trial of the *sweetness* of *Grace*; Now you that have once *tasted* of it, and grown *wearry*, do by your practice tell the World that there is no sweetness in it at all, which is a great wrong to *Grace* and *Mercy*.

'Tis high time now to speak of the second thing prayed for, which is *Peace*; Whence observe, *That Peace is a great Bless-Observat. sing, one of the main Privileges of the Gospel.*

I shall, first, Shew you what it is: Secondly, Give you some Observations concerning it; and thirdly, Come to Application.

1. What it is; 'Tis a *tranquility* of mind, arising from the *sense* of a *sure estate* with God. To this Peace two things concur. First, A *sure estate*, or *term* of *amity* with God: this is called in Scripture *peace* with God, and is the *immediate effect* and *fruit* of *actual Justification*, Rom 5. 1. And then secondly, There is a *sense* of this *sure estate*, or the *reflex* of this *amitie* upon the *Conscience*, and is usually called *peace of Conscience*, and it is a *special privilege* of Christs *spiritual Kingdom*: See

M

Rom.

Rom. 14. 17: the Apostle speaketh there of a *peace* which is ranked with *joy in the Holy Ghost*. But it will be better opened to you in the ensuing Propositions.

1. *Man by Nature is at enmity with God, and upon ill terms with him.* When we lost *Gods Image* we lost *his favour*. This enmity is *mutual*; Man is an enemy to God, and God is an enemy to man: On Gods part there is *wrath*, which is all that we are born to by *Nature*, *Ephes. 2. 3.* and on mans part there is *hatred*; we *hate God*, because we *love sin*, *Col. 1. 21.* Gods enmity is suspended in the day of his patience; Now and then Wrath breaketh out, but 'tis not executed to the full; *sentence is past*, but not *executed*: nay it may be *reversed* if we take *sanctuary at Grace*; for God is now upon a *treaty* with us, or *offer of peace*; therefore 'tis said, *Peace on Earth*, *Luke 2. 14.* The next World is a time of *vengeance and recompence*, but during our *earthly state* God woeth us and inviteth us to lay down the weapons of our defiance, and accept of terms of *Peace*: Thus matters stand on Gods part. But now on our part this enmity is carried on with a great deal of spight: We seek to *destroy God*, and to deface all the memorials of him that are impressed upon the Conscience; we *ungod* him in our thoughts and affections: 'tis a *pleasing thought* to us to suppose if *there were no God*; as guilty prisoners with there were *no Judge, no Assizes*, that they may not be called to an accompt.

2. *Man being at enmity with God, all Gods creatures are at enmity with him.* Angels, men, fire, air, water, they are all at Gods beck, and are ready to destroy man when ever the Lord biddeth them; as good Subjects take part with their Prince against Rebels: The Angels *hearken for the voice of his Word*, *Psal. 103.* If he do but *hiss*, for the fly of Egypt, *Isai. 7.* 'tis ready presently: 'Tis ill contending with him that can command *Legions*; The fire saith, *Let me burn his house or dwelling place*; the water saith, *Let me drown his ships*; the Earth, *Let me swallow him up quick as I did Corah and his complices*. Certainly the Lord cannot want instruments of Vengeance: Man as Gods creature is his *own enemy*: God needeth not fetch forces from without, there is enough within; the *humors* of the body, the *passions* of the mind, all these are willing to serve God as creatures for our punishment: so that if God should but arm our *own thoughts*,

thoughts, our own affections against us, man is soon overwhelmed : who can bear the wounds given him by his own Conscience ?

3. *We being in this estate, can only be reconciled by Jesus Christ: He obtaineth it by his Merit, and conferreth it by his Power.* For his Merit, see Col. 1. 20. and *Isai. 53 5.* *The chastisement of our Peace was upon him:* It will not stand with the Majesty of God to make Peace with us without *satisfaction* : That there might be no wrong done to his *Sovereignty*, his *Law*, his *Truth* his *Justice*, his *Holiness*, it was meet that we should be *chastised* either in our own persons, or in our Surety ; and also all notions of the Godhead are kept inviolable. Then for his *Power* : He *worketh it at first*, and then *maintaineth and keepeth it afoot* between God and us : He *worketh it at first*, and bringeth it about thus, by *opening the Gospel*, wherein God is revealed as pacified in Christ ; which is the only doctrine that can *calm the Conscience*, and establish the Soul in peace and hope : All *false Religions* are accompanied with *scruples and jealousies*, *Jer. 6. 16.* *there is no rest for the Soul.* And then he applyeth the Gospel by his Spirit : The Gospel is a *sovereign Plaster*, but Christs *own* hand must make it stick. There is a double ground of enmity in mans heart, the *guilt* and *power of sin* ; Christ wipeth *guilt* out of the Conscience by the application of his own blood, and weakeneth the *power of sin* more and more : Sin is the *Make-bate*, and Christ is the *Prince of Peace*, *Isa. 9. 6.* The great end for which God set him up, was to plant grace in our hearts, and so to work a friendship between God and us. But Christ is not only the *Authour*, but the great *Conserver* of the Peace between us and Heaven, Partly by his *Intercession* : as foreign States have their Agents in Princes Courts to preserve a mutual Correspondence : so Christ taketh up all differences that fall out between us and God, that no breach may ensue, *Heb. 9 24.* Partly, by a further declaration of Gods love to the Conscience, *Isa. 26. 3.* Partly, by stirring us up to watchfulness, that no occasion may be given our part by *returning to folly*, *Psal. 35. 8.* Thus you see what Christ doth ; all is briefly summed up by the Apostle in 2 Cor. 5. 19. *God was in Christ reconciling the world* : Where note that our peace with God is a *reconciliation* or a peace after a breach, and this reconciliation is *mutual* ; God appeareth in a *forms of grace and mercy* to us, and we lay down our *enmity* against God ; he

is gracious to us, and we love and serve him : only observe, that God *beginneth first*, though he be the *wronged party* ; he was *reconciling* : And mark again, 'tis in *Christ*, to shew 'tis sure : Those that are reconciled to men, are still in *umbrage* and *suspicion* with them ; they that have *once been enemies*, they may be again, therefore they do not return to *perfect grace* ; when the *wound* is cured, the *scars* remain : But our reconciliation with God 'tis like the *sodoring of a vessel*, which is strongest in the crack ; or as a leg broken, if *well set*, it is the stronger : so are we upon *firmer terms* than we were in *innocency* ; there was a possibility of being at odds with God, which is now taken away.

Tranquillum
Deus, tranquil-
lat omnia.

4. God being reconciled in *Christ*, all things else are at peace with us : For his League with us is *offensive* and *defensive*. My horses are as thy horses, and my chariots as thy chariots : God and all his *Confederates* are in the League, or rather God and all his *Subjects* : as a Prince doth not only contract for his person, but his *Subjects* and *Estates*. Angels are at peace with us ; in stead of being *Instruments of vengeance*, they become *ministering Spirits*, Heb. 1. 14. A Christian hath an *invisible guard* ; Satan is sensible of it, though we be not ; he saith of *Job* : thou hast *hedged him round about* : Gods heirs are well attended ; Angels wait upon them at Christs direction. Other creatures serve us, as if they were in *League* and *Covenant* with us ; Stars, Winds, Seas, Beasts : Job 5. 23. Thou shalt be in league with the stones of the field, and the beasts shall be at peace with thee : They are included in Gods League, which is as much as if there were an *express Covenant* between us and them, that they shall not do us harm ; they are at the *beck of Providence*, and therefore so far as it conduceth to our good, at our service : So *Hosea*, 2. 18. I will make a *Covenant for them with the beasts of the field, and the fowls of Heaven, &c.* So for men, they are *Wolves* one to another, yet God can change them : The Gospel *civilizeth*, and pulleth the *beast* out of mens bosoms where it worketh least : See *Isa.* 11 7, 8, 9. The hearts of men are in Gods hands ; he can either *destroy their persons*, or *restrain their rage*, or *turn out their respects* to you : When a mans ways please the Lord, he maketh his enemies to be at peace with him, *Prov.* 16. 17 We think to carry all by force and violence many times, but obedience to God is the best way to gain the respects of men ; as a key openeth a door

door sooner than an *Iron-bar*: If you be in with God, you stop *enmity* and *strife* at the *Fountain-head*. So for *peace with the Saints*; Jesus Christ *breaketh down the partition wall*, Ephes. 2. 16, 17, 18. removeth prejudices and jealousies, changeth interests, cleareth up truths, and by his Spirit meekneth their hearts that they may be at one. Surely * *his Blood is the best cement* and * *Eodem sanguine* *bond of friendship*: Christ hath called us into a *Body*, that there *guine Christi* might be peace in the Church, Col. 3. 15. *Brothers* have defence *glutinati*. Aug. the feelings of Nature, but *fellow Members* are wont to care one *Confess. de seip.* for another: Peace with *fellow-Saints* was his *dying charge*, so & *Alipio*. his *Legacy*, John 14. 27. his prayer, John 17. and his constant care now he is in Heaven. Then for peace with our selves; sin rendeth and teareth a man from himself, it maketh a *murder* in his own heart, Rom. 2. 15- *thoughts accusing and excusing by turns* *μὴ ἀλλήλων*. A man and his conscience are at odds, and a man and his affections: Now we being reconciled to God, the foundation is laid for *peace of Conscience*, that we and our hearts may talk together as *loving friends*, without scolding, without reproaching. And then grace giveth us a *calm and contented spirit*, which easeth us of a great deal of trouble; for a *discontented man* is his *own burden*; We need the *peace of God* not only in our consciences, but to bear rule in our hearts, Col. 3. 16. that we may refer all matters to Gods disposal, Psal. 4. 8.

3. Though all things are at peace with us, yet some troubles are left for our exercise, but not for our hurt and destruction. The peace of God 'tis a very riddle, Phil. 4. 7. *It passeth all understanding*. To sense who more wretched than Gods children, hated, reviled, persecuted, afflicted? How are they at peace with God and all his creatures? I answer, The privileges of Christs Kingdom are *spiritual*; what ever troubleth the Saints, nothing can harm them, 1. Pet. 3. 13. they may harm the *man*, but not the *Christian*; All things are at peace with them, because they are at the disposal of a *wise and gracious Providence*, and cannot do hurt to the *better part*; they work for good. *Death* is at peace with them, which doth the *greatest hurt to the body*: Ask old *Simeon*, and he'll tell you so, Luke 2. 29. *Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, &c.* They are sent for by their friend; the *King of fears* is a *grim messenger*, but they know his errand, and therefore are not afraid.

6. In Heaven there is a perfect Peace; In the new Jerusalem all is quiet: 'Tis just with God to give you that are troubled *ἀνάσσει*, rest, 2 Thes. 1. 7. And there is a rest that remaineth for the children of God, Heb. 4. 9. there we rest both from our sorrows and our labours; there is no trouble nor affliction more; all privileges are at the height; no more apprehensions of Gods wrath, fears of death; there we are not only free from hurt, but danger; our exercise is at end; there we do immediately behold the Kings face, which is not granted us here; now we are in Absaloms condition, pardoned, reconciled, but cannot see the Kings face. So much for the Nature of this Peace, and the Observations that open it to you. Let us now apply all.

Use 1.
Tryal.

* Pax nostra
bellum contra
Satanam.
Tertul. ad
Martyr.

If Peace be such an excellent Blessing, and a main privilege of the Gospel, then it puts us upon trial; Are we at peace with God through Christ? If it be so, then 1. *Enmity is laid aside*: Gods enemies will be yours, and yours will be Gods; otherwise what peace? What do we talk of peace with God, as long as we are in league with Gods enemy? What peace as long as the whoredoms of thy mother Jezabel are so many? Our League with God is defensive and offensive. * There is a war with Satan if we be at peace with God; The spiritual conflict is the best evidence we have of our unity with God. With the wicked God is at open war; There is no peace, &c. *Isai. 57. 20.* The Devil may be at a secret peace with them, but God is at distance, and abhorreth all communion with them. Christ is called the Prince of Peace, *Isa. 9. 6.* but 'tis to those that submit to his government; to his Subjects he saith, *Take my yoke upon you, and ye shall find rest, Matt. 11. 29.* We are not in a capacity to receive this Blessing, till we take an Oath of Allegiance to Christ, and continue in obedience to him. 2. The next Note is, *delight in communion with God, Job 22. Acquaint thy self with him, and be at peace.* A man that is at peace with God, will be often in his company; Bondage and servile awe keepeth us out of Gods presence; We cannot come to him, because we cannot come in peace. A man never delighteth in duties of commerce with God, when either he hath a false peace or no peace: Duties disturb a false peace; and when we are raw and sore, we are unfit for work. When a Peace is concluded between Nations that were before

at War, *Trading is revived*; so will it be between God and you; Commerce will be revived, and you will be *trading* into Heaven, that you may bring away rich Treasures of grace and comfort.

It presseth us to make peace with God by Christ: We speak *Use 2.* to two sorts, the *careless* and the *distressed*. 1. To the *careless* *Exhortation*; Consider, you are *born enemies* to God; They that loved him from their cradle upward, never loved him: You must make *Peace* with God, for you cannot maintain *War* against him; *Are you stronger then he*? What, will you arm? lusts against Angels? And do you know the *terror of his wrath*? one *spark* of it is enough to drink up all your blood and spirits, *Jeb* 6. 4. The present life is but a *vapour*, soon gone: if God be angry, he can arm the *least creature* to kill you; The whole Creation taketh part with God; *Adrian* was strangled with a *Gnat*. But death will not end your sorrows; none can punish their enemies as God can; he can ruine your body and soul for ever and for ever: How will you *screech* and *howl* like *Dragons*? But your torments are without end and without ease: Be wise then, and do not sleep when you: * *damnation sleepeth not*; now * 2 *Pet.* 2. 3. is the time to make your peace with God; An that *you knew in this your day the things that belong to your peace*, *Luke* 19. 41. Peace must be had now, or else it can never be had hereafter; the *day of patience* will not always last; therefore let us get into the *Ark* before the *Flood* cometh: *Tis a dreadful thing to be under the wrath of God, and you know not how soon it will light; our care should be to be *found of him in peace*, 2 *Pet.* 3. 14. Christ is now a Saviour, then a Judge; You will yell and howl for mercy when 'tis too late. 2. I am to speak to *distressed Consciences*; Lift up your heads, God offereth you *peace*, he sent Angels from Heaven to proclaim it, *Luke* 2. 14. The ground of the offer is *good-will*, and the end of the offer is only his own *glory*; God hath no other reasons to move him to it but his own *good-will*, and no other aim then to *glorifie his grace*; see *Ephes.* 1. 6. and therefore take hold of his *Covenant of Peace*, as 'tis called, *Isai.* 54. 10. He is content we shall have *Peace* upon these terms, and *Peace* assured us by *Covenant*. Certainly 'tis not a duty to doubt, nor a thing acceptable to God, that we should always be upon terms of perplexity, and keep Conscience

Use 3.

ran with a sense of wrath and sin : wherefore did Christ bear the chastisement of our Peace ? God is more pleased with a chearful confidence, then a servile spirit full of bondage and fear.

'Tis *Caution* : If *Peace* be a *Priviledge* of the Gospel, let us take care that we settle upon a *right Peace*, lest we mistake a *Judgement for a Blessing*. 'Tis the greatest Judgement that can be, to be given up to our own *secure presumptions*, and to be lulled asleep with a *false peace*. When the pulse doth not beat, the body is in a dangerous estate; so when *Conscience is benumbed*, and smiteth not, 'tis very sad. The grounds of a false and carnal Peace, are, 1. *Ignorance of our condition* : Many go hood-wink'd to Hell ; a little light breaking in would trouble all, *Rom. 7. 9.* Sluttish corners are not seen in the dark* : Things are naught that cannot brook a trial : So you may know that 'tis very bad with men, when they will not *come to the light*, *John 3. 20.* or cannot endure to *be alone*, lest *Conscience* should return upon it self, and they be forced to look inward ; their confidence is supported by *meer ignorance*. 2. *Sensuality* ; Some mens lives are nothing else but a *diversion* from one pleasure to another, that they may put off that which they cannot put away ; there is *bondage* in their Consciences, and they are loth to take notice of it : *Amos 6. 3.* They drink Wine in bowls, and put far away the evil day : This is to quench the Spirit without a metaphor : All their pleasures are but *stolen waters*, and bread eaten in secret ; frisks of mirth, when they can get conscience asleep : Cains heart was a trouble to him, therefore he falleth on building of Cities ; Saul to cure the evil spirit ran to his Musick ; and so usually men choke Conscience either with *business* or *pleasures*. 3. From *formality* and *slightness* in the spiritual life. First, Either they do not *seriously perform duty* ; that will make men see what carnal unsavory saplets spirits they have : He that never stirreth, doth not feel the lameness of his joynts ; *Formal duties* make men the more secure ; as the Pharisee thought himself in a good case, because, &c. *Luke 18. 11.* but *spiritual duties* search us to the purpose, as new wine doth old bottles. Or else secondly, They do not *exasperate their lusts*, and seriously resist sin : Tumult is made by *opposition*. When a man tamely yieldeth to Satan, no wonder that Satan lets him alone *Luke 11. 21.* The goods are in peace, because the

* *Iniqua lex est qua se examinari non possunt.* Tertul. Apol.

the *Devils possession* is not disturbed; he rageth most when his Kingdome is tottering, *Rev. 12. 12.* Please the *worst natures*, and they will not trouble you; There is no tempest where *wind* and *tide* go together: You let *Satan* alone, and he lets you alone; this is a *peace* that will end in *trouble*.

I now come to speak of the third thing prayed for, and that is *Love*, which (being taken here not for Gods love to us, but our love to God) may be thus defined; *'Tis a gracious and holy affection, which the Soul upon the apprehension of Gods love in Christ, returneth back to God again by his own grace.* Love. Definition.
The *Grounds* 1. Grounds and *Causes* of it are two; the one worketh by way of *argument* Causes of it. and *swason*, the other by way of *efficacy* and *power*.

1. It ariseth from the *sense* and *apprehensions* of Gods love in Christ. Love is like a *Diamond*, that is not wrought upon but by its own dust: 1 John 4. 19 *We love him, because he loved us first.* Love is like an *eccho*, it returneth what it receiveth; 'tis a *reflex*, a *reverberation*, or a casting back of Gods beam and flame upon himself. The cold wall sendeth back no *reflex* of heat till the Sun shine upon it, and warm it first: so neither do we love God till the Soul be first filled with a sense of his Love: And as * rays in their reflection are more faint and cold; so our * *Radius reflex-* love to God is much weaker then Gods love to us. *Valdesso* saith, *us languet.* God loveth the *lowest Saint* more then the *highest Angel* loveth God. Once more, The more direct the stroke and beam is upon the wall, or any other *solid body*, the stronger alwayes is the reflection; so the more sense we have of the love of God, the stronger is our love to him.

2. The next Cause of Love is the *grace* of God: there is not only an *apprehension* of Love, but the *force* of the Spirit goeth along with it: Our *thoughts*, our *discourses* upon the love of God to us in Christ, nay our *sense* and *feeling* of it, is not enough to beget this grace in us. Love is a *pure flame*, that must be kindled from above, as the *Vestal fire* by a *Sun beam*: 1 John 4. 7. *Love is of God*; that is, of a *Celestial* or *Heavenly* Origin^{al}. There is in the Soul naturally an * *hatred* of God, and a * *Rom. 1. 30.* *pronefs* to mingle with present comforts, which can only be cured by the Spirit of grace: Our *naked apprehensions* will not break the force of *natural enmity*; and 'tis God that must *circum-*

cumcise and pare away the foreskin of the heart before we can love him, *Deut.* 30. 6. There is a natural proneness to *doze upon the creature, and hate the Creator*. Base creatures neglect God, and pollute themselves with one another; and there is no help for it till the heart be over-powred by grace. Thus for the Causes of Love.

The Object of Love is God himself; not merely as considered in himself, for so he is terrible to the creature; but as God in Christ, for so he will be known and respected by us in the Gospel, and so we have the highest engagement to love him; not only upon the respects of Nature, as our Creator, but of Grace, as our God and Father in Christ. Now God is the supreme Object of Love, and other things are loved for Gods sake, because of that of God which we find in them: as his Word, which is the Copy of his Holiness, his engraven Image; as the Coyn beareth the Image of the Prince; so 'tis said, *Psal.* 119. 47. *I will delight my self in thy Commandments which I have loved.* And then his Saints, which are his living image, as Children resemble their Father; so 'tis said, *Psal.* 16. 3. *To the Saints, and to the excellent of the Earth, in whom is my delight.* And then other men, because of his Command, *1 Pet.* 1. 5. *Adde to brotherly-kindness, love.* So his creatures, because in them we enjoy God, the effects of his Bounty. But chiefly his Ordinances, as they exhibit more of God then the creatures can: So that Love respects God and other things for Gods sake.

Again, In the Description I take notice of the Essence or formal nature of it, and call it the return of a gracious and holy affection to God. Love is carried out to its Object two ways, by desire and delight: Our necessity and need of God is the ground of desire; and our propriety and interest is the ground of delight: Desires are the feet of love, by which it runneth after its Object; and delight is the rest and contentment of the Soul in the enjoyment of it: because of our imperfect fruition in this life, Love bewrayeth it self by desires mottly, or pursuing after God: See *Psal.* 63. 8. *My heart followeth hard after thee:* It noteth those sallies and earnest egressions of Soul after the Lord, that we may have more communion and fellowship with him. In short, the radical (if I may so speak) and principal disposition of Love is a desire of Union; for all other effects of love flow from it:

This

This is that makes the Soul to prize the Ordinances, because God is to be enjoyed there; and these are means of communion with him, *Psal. 26. 8. I have loved the place where shine honour dwelleth.* This maketh sin terrible, because it separatieth from God, *Isai. 59. 2.* This maketh Heaven amiable; the fairest part of our portion in Heaven is a closer and nearer communion with Christ, *Phil. 1. 23.* This maketh the day of judgement sweet, for then we shall meet with our Beloved in the *Apoc. 2 Tim. 4. 18.* In short, this maketh the soul to take such contentment in thinking of God, and speaking of God; 'tis the feast of the Soul; *My meditation of him shall be sweet, Psal. 104. 34.* Their Souls cannot have a greater solace then to think what a God they have in Christ.

Having in some manner described the Love of God, let me use some Arguments to press you to it.

First, *God hath commanded it:* The sum of the Law is Love. When the Scribe came to Christ, *Math. 22. 35. Master, which is the great Commandment in the Law?* Jesus said unto him, *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and all thy soul, and all thy might:* Mark, this is the first and great Commandment, to love God; 'Tis not a sower Command, but sweet and profitable: God might have burdened us with other manner of Precepts, considering his absolute right; to offer our children in sacrifice, to mangle our flesh with whips and scourges; but these are cruelties proper to the Devils worship. The Lord is a gentle Master, and only desireth the love of his servants; we have cause to thank him for such a gracious Precept. If he should require us not to love him, this were Hell it self; that is the Hell of Hell, that they which are there do not love God. 'Tis our privilege as much as our Duty. God loveth all his creatures, but hath commanded none to love him again but man and Angels; so that it is the great privilege of the Saints, to love God. It had been a great favour if God had given us leave to love him: as it would be a great favour if a King should give leave to one of his meanest subjects to have the key of his privy Chamber to come to him and visit him, and be familiar with him when he pleaseth; how would this be talked of in the world! yet this is not so wonderful, since the King and the Peasant are both men, in their natural being they are equal, though in their

Reasons why we must love God.

1. God hath commanded it.

civil distinction and condition of life there be a difference. But what a favour is this, that he who is the *King of Kings*, and *Lord of Lords*, doth not only permit his creature made by his own hands to come to him and love him, and deal with him when he pleaseth, but hath expressly commanded it? nay this is the great Commandment: Certainly God is very desirous of our love, when he layeth such an *Obligation* upon us: Was there ever such a Master, that made this to be his servants chiefest duty, that they should love him? Again, I observe in Gods Command, that the Precept runneth thus, *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might*. The Lord would not lose one grain of the creatures love; Surely he *valueth* it, when he is so *solicitous* about it. If we should see a wise man careful to preserve the reliques of what we counted a neglected weed, it would make us think there were somewhat in it. We lavish away our love upon trifles, and God prizeth every grain of it: you see he speaketh as if he would not lose one dust of love; *all thy soul, all thy heart, and all thy might*. When he biddeth us love our neighbour, he sets limits to it, *Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thy self*; but when he biddeth us love God, he requireth *all the heart*: The only measure is to love him without measure. The next place that I shall take notice of, where the Precept is recorded, is *Deut. 10. 12. And now Israel, what doth the Lord require of thee, but to fear the Lord thy God. and to walk in all his wayes, and to love him, and to serve the Lord with all thy heart, and with all thy soul?* God doth not require of us things without the *sphere of duty*; that we should go into the depths of the Sea, toss Mountains in the Ayr, pluck the Stars from Heaven, &c. these things lie out of the *power of man*: He doth not require of us *barbarous austerities*; to offer our *first-born*, to lance our selves, to mangle our flesh with whips and scourges: He doth not require of us absolutely such things which some men can and ought to perform; not such a *measure of Aims*, what then would become of the *poor*? not such a *degree of wisdom and learning*, what then would become of the *simple and unlearned*? But O Israel, what hath the Lord required of thee, but that thou shouldst love the Lord thy God? A duty to be performed by *poor and rich, learned and unlearned*; what ever their estate

estate and condition be, they may all love God: There are many in Heaven that never were in a condition to give, but to receive, that were never learned, and skilled in sciences, but none that never loved God.

Secondly, God hath deserved love. Let us a little take notice of Gods love to us; He beginneth, and loveth us, that we may love him again, 1 John 4. 19. If God should hate us, we were bound to love him, because of his excellency, and because of our duty and obligation as we are creatures; how much more when God hath loved us, and bestowed so many benefits upon us? Love is an affection which God will have repaid in kind: When he chideth us, he doth not expect that we should chide him again, when he judgeth us, we must not judge him again: in these things the creature is not to retaliate: 'Tis true, we do it too often, but still to our loss and blame. But now when he loveth us, he willeth us to love him again; he loveth us for no other cause but that he may be loved; Love must be paid in kind: As water is cast into a Pump when the Springs lie low to bring up more water; so God sheddeth abroad his Love into our hearts, that our love may rise up to him again by way of gratitude and recompence. Now in the Love of God we may take notice of the

1. Properties
 - and
 2. Effects
- } of it.

First, For the Properties of Gods Love, consider,

1. The Ancientness of it; Psal. 103. 17. From everlasting to everlasting, &c. With reverence we may speak, ever since God was God he was our God: You may track his Love from one Eternitie to another. Before the world was, he loved us, and when the world is no more he loveth us still: His Love begin in eternal purposes of Grace: and it endeth in our eternal possession of Glory. 'Tis not a thing of yesterday; he is our ancient Friend; He loved us not on'y before we were lovely, but before we were at all. We adjourn and put off our love of God to old age, and thrust it into a narrow corner: When we have wasted and spent our strength in the world, we dream of a devout retirement: But the Lord thinketh he could never love us early enough; From everlasting to everlasting, &c. We receive the fruits and effects of Love

Properties of
Gods love.

1. The Ancientness.

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in time, but all cometh out of Gods *ancient* and *eternal* Love; this grace was provided for us *before we were born*. Yea look upon Gods Love *in time*; how merciful was God to us before we could shew the *least sign of thankfulness* to him? He loved us a long time before ever we had a thought of him: *In infancy* we could not so much *as know* that he loved us: When we came to *years of discretion*, we knew how to *offend* him, before we knew how to *love* and *serve* him: How many are there of whom it may be said, *God is not in all their thoughts?* and yet all this while God hath *thoughts of Peace* and *blessing* towards them.

a The Freeness.

Dii multa dedere neglegit.

2. Consider the *Freeness of Gods love*: The value of all benefits ariseth from the *necessity* of him that *receiveth*, and the *good-will* of him that *giveth*. God wanted not us, our love is no benefit to him; but we wanted him, we are undone without him; yet he hath more delight in *pardon*ing than we in *salvation*, and he is more ready to *give* than we to *ask*: He often calleth upon us to call upon him; as if he were *afraid* we would not *ask*, or not *enough*, or not *soon enough*, or not *often enough*. A man would think that our *wants* should be *importunate enough* to put us upon *requests*, and that we needed not *enforcements* to *Prayer*; yet you see God doth not only *prevent the request*, but *make the Prayer*, and stirreth us up to utter it. But we are not only *needy creatures*, but *guilty creatures*; and that God should love us! When we were in our *blood* and *filthiness*, 'twas a *time of loves*, Ezek. 16. 7. This is the great Miracle of divine Love, that a *time of loathing* is a *time of loves*: And we will wonder at it more if we consider the *active and endless hatred* of his Holiness against *sin*, and therefore why not against *sinners*? The holiness of his Nature and Essence sets him against them; and *natural antipathies* and *aversations* can never be *reconciled*; as a Man can never be brought to delight in a Toad, or a Lamb in a Wolf. And consider again his *infinite Wisdom*; We may love that which is not lovely, because we are often blinded by *inordinate affection*; but now Gods Love is *not blind*, and overcome with the vehemency of any passion, as man is: this maketh the wonder, there is no *blindness* and *passion* in him that *loveth*, and yet the thing that is *loved* is *vile and uncomely*.

3. The

3. The frequency of the expressions of his Love: It would 3. Frequency.
weary the *Arm of an Angel* to write down Gods repeated Acts
of Grace; *Rom. 5. 17. The free gift is of many offences unto Ju-*
stification. We carry loads of experiences with us to Heaven. Gods
Book of Remembrance is written within and without. This will
be our wonder and amazement at the last day, to see such huge
sums cancelled with Christs blood: Every day pardoning mercy
is put in: Our past lives are but a constant experience of our sinning,
and Gods pardoning. We are weary of every thing but sin;
we are never weary of that, because 'tis natural to us. The
very refreshments of life by continuance grow burdensome: Meat,
drink, musick, sleep, the chiefest pleasures within a while need
to be refreshed with other pleasures; Man is a restless creature,
and loveth shift and change. But now we are never weary of sin;
we have it from the womb, and we keep it to the grave; and yet
all this while we subsist upon God: We subsist upon him every
moment; We have life and breath, and hourly maintenance
from him, whom we thus grieve and offend: Dependance should
beget observance, but in us 'tis otherwise: As a dunghill send-
eth out Vapors to obscure the Sun that shineth upon it; so do
we dishonour the God of our mercies, and grieve him day by
day: How long hath God been multiplying pardons, and yet
Free-grace is not tyred and grown weary?

4. Consider the variety of the expressions of his Love: W. 4. Variety.
have all kind of mercies, we eat mercy, we wear mercy, we are
encompassed with mercy as with a shield: The Apostle saith, *2 Per.*
1. 3. He hath given us all things that pertain to life and godli-
ness; that is (as I would interpret) all things that are neces-
sary to life natural, to life spiritual; to maintain grace here, and
to bring us to glory hereafter. He that hath an interest in Christ,
his portion is not straitned; he hath a right to all things, and
a possession of as much as Providence judgeth needful; therein we
must not be our own carvers: A man of mortified affections
thinketh he hath provision enough, if he hath things necessary to
life and godliness: and will you not love God for all this? Cer-
tainly we do not want obligations, but we want affections.
Look as too much wood puts out the fire and causeth smook; so
the multitude and daily experience of Gods mercies lessen-
eth the esteem of them: We have but too many mercies,
and

and that maketh us *unkind* and *neglectful* of God. What shall I tell you of Sabbaths, Ordinances, Food, Raiment? If a man would be but his *own remembrancer*, and now and then come to an account with God, he would cry out, *Oh the multitude of thy thoughts to us-ward, how great is the sum of them!* *Psal.* 139. Or if a man would but keep a *journal* of his own life, what a vast volume would his private experiences make? how would he find mercy and himself *still growing up together*? Shall I shew you a little what a *multitude of mercies* there are? I will not speak of the *higher* and *choycer* mercies, such as concern the *soul*, but of such as concern the *body*: What a deal of provision is there for the comfort and welfare of the body? I instance in these mercies, partly because they are *so common*, that they are scarce noted; partly because *carnal men* prize the *body* most, they prefer it above the *Soul*: now the Lord would leave them *wish-out excuse*; they that *love the body* shall not want Arguments to urge them to *love God*, since he hath bestowed so much of his *love* and *care* upon the *body*, to gratifie *all the senses* not only for necessity but *delight*. There is *light* for the *eye*; the poorest man hath *glorious Lamps* to light him to his labours: For the *taste*, such variety of refreshments of a different *sap* and *savour*; For the *smell*, delicious infusions into the *Ayr* from *flowers* and *gums*, and *aromatick plants*; For the *ears*, musick from birds and men; and all this to make our *pilgrimage comfortable*, and our *hearts better*. How many creatures hath the Lord given us to help to *bear burdens*? how many things for *meat* and *medicine*? If man had not been *created last*, after the World was settled and furnished, we should have seen the want of many things which we now enjoy and do not value: First God provided *our house*, and then *furnished our table*; and when all was ready, then *Man* was brought in as the *Lord of all*. We are not affected with these mercies: How can we sin against God, that can look *no where* but we see arguments and reasons to love him? As Christ said, *Many good works have I done amongst you, for which of these do you stone me?* So may the Lord plead, I have done many things for you; you cannot open your eyes but you see love, you cannot walk abroad but you smell love and hear love; &c. for which of those do you grieve me, and deal so despitigiously with me?

Let

Let me now come to the *Effects* of Gods Love; I shall only ^{1. The Effects} instance in those three great *Effects*, *Creation*, *Preservation*, of Gods love, and *Redemption*: Certainly that must needs be a *great bonfire*, out of which there flies not only *sparks*, but *brands*: and so hath Love which can produce such *fruits* and *effects*, must needs be exceeding great.

1. *Creation*, This deserveth love from the creature: *The* ^{1. Creation} *fruit* of the Vineyard belongeth to him that planted it; and whom should we love but him that *gave us the power* to love? All that thou hast, all that thou canst see, that thou canst touch, is his gift, and the work of his hands: He gave thee the essence not of a *Tree*, a *Bird*, a *Beast*, but of a *Man*, capable of reason, fit for happiness: God made *other creatures* by a word of *Command*, and *Man* by *Counsel*; 'twas not, *Be thou*, but, *Let us make man*, to shew that the whole Trinity assisted and joyned in consultation: He made other creatures for his *glory*, but not for his *love* and *service*; God is glorified in them *passively*, as they give us occasion to glorifie God; the creatures are the *harp*, but *man* maketh the *musick*: *All thy works praise thee, and thy Saints bless thee, Psal. 145. 10.* How many steps may a Christian ascend in his praise and thanksgiving? We might have been *stones*, without *sense*; *beasts* without *reason*; born *infidels*, and without *Faith*; We might have continued *sinners*, and without *grace*: all these are so many steps of mercy. But *Creation* is that we are to speak of; and truly it deserveth a remembrance, especially * *in youth*, when the effects * *Eccles. 12. 1.* of Gods *creating bounty* are most fresh in our sense and feeling: We are alwayes to *remember our Creator*, but then especially: The aches of old age serve to put us in mind of our ingratitude; but the *strength*, and *vigor*, and *freshness* of youth, should make us remember the bounty of our Creator. Look upon the *body* or the *soul*, and you will see that we have cause to love him. In the *body* we find as many *mercies* as there are *limbs*: If a man should be born *blind* or *lame*, or should lose an *eye*, or an *arm*, or a *leg*, how much would he love him that should *restore* the use of these members again? We are as much bound to love him that *gave* them to us at first, especially when we consider how often we have *deserved* to lose them. We would love him that should *raise us from the dead*: God is the *Author* of life,

and the continual Preserver and Defender of it. If we love our Parents that begat us, we should much more love God that made them and us too out of nothing. Take notice of the *curious frame* of the body; David saith, *Psal. 139. 16. I am wonderfully made; pictus sum*, so the vulgar rendreth it, *painted as with a needle*, like a garment of needle-work of divers colours, richly embroydered with nerves and veins. What shall I speak of the *eye*, wherein there is such curious Workmanship, that many upon the first sight of it have been driven to acknowledge God? Of the *hand*, made to open and shut, and to serve the labours and ministeries of Nature without *wasting* and *decay* for many years: if they should be of marble or iron, with such constant use they would soon wear out; and yet now they are of *flesh* they last as long as life lasteth. Of the *head*, fitly placed to be the seat of the senses, to *command* and *direct* the rest of the members. Of the *lungs*, a frail piece of flesh, yet though in *continual motion* of a *long ase*. 'Twere easie to enlarge upon this occasion: But I am to *preach a Sermon*, not to read an *Anatomy Lecture*. In short therefore, every part is so placed and framed, as if God had employed his whole Wisedome about it:

But as yet we have spoken but of the *Casket* wherein the *Jewell* lieth; the *Soul*, that divine *spark* and *blast*; how *quick*, *nimble*, *various* and *indefatigable* in its motions? how *comprehensive* in its capacities? how it animateth the body, and is like God himself *all in every part*? Who can trace the flights of Reason? What a value hath God set upon the Soul? He made it after his Image, he redeemed it with Christs Blood, &c. Well then, God who hath made such a *body*, such a *soul*, deservert love; He that made the Soul hath most right to dwell in it; 'tis a curious House of his own framing: But he will not enter it by *force* and *violence*, but by *consent*; he expecteth when *love* will give up the *Keys*: *Rev. 3. 17. Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any man open to me, I will come in and sup with him*. Why should Christ stand at the door and knock, and ask leave to enter into his own House? He hath *right enough* to enter, only he expecteth till *we open* to him.

2. Preservation.

2. *Preservation*: We are not apprehensive enough of dayly mercies: The *Preservation* of the World is a *constant Miracle*;
The

The World is *hanged upon nothing* (as 'tis in the Book of Job.) A feather will not stay in the Air; and yet what hath the world to support it but the *thin fluid Air* that is round about it? 'Tis easie to prove that the waters are higher then the earth: so that we are alwayes in the case the Israelites were in, when they passed through the Red Sea; *Nos sumus etiam tanquam in medio rubri maris* (saith *Luther*,) the Waters are round about us, and above us, bound up in an heap as it were by God, and yet we are not swallowed up: 'Tis true, the danger is not so *sensible* and *immediate* as that of the Red Sea, because of the *constant* rampire of Providence. More particularly, from the *womb* to the *grave* we have *hourly maintenance* from God. Look as the *beams in the Aire* are no longer continued then the *Sun* shineth; so we do no longer continue then God *upholdeth our beings* by the word of his Power, *Heb. 1. 3.* Or as 'tis with a Seal; in the Water, take away the *seal* and the *impress* vanisheth; so do we disappear as soon as God doth but *loosen his Hand* and *Almighty Grasp*, by which all things are upheld and preserved. But let us speak of Providences that are more sensible: Into how many diseases and dangers might we fall, if God did not look after us as the Nurse after her Child? How many have gone to the *grave*, nay it may be to *Hell*, since the *last night*? How many *actual dangers* have we escaped? God hath looked after us, as if he had forgotten all the world besides; as if his whole employment were to do us good: He saith, that he will no more forget us, then a woman doth her sucking child; and that we are written before him, and graven in the palms of his hands, *Isai 45. 15.* &c. as men tye a string about their finger for a remembrance or record in a book such things as they would regard: all these are expressions to describe the particular and express care of Gods Providence over his Children. Now what shall be rendered to the Lord for all this? If we could do and suffer never so much for God, it will not answer the mercy of one day: Certainly at least God expecteth love for love; Love him as he is the strength of thy life and length of thy dayes, *Deut. 30. 26.* Every dayes experience is new fuel to keep in the fire: The very beasts will respect their preservers, they are loving to those that are kind to them; The Ass knoweth his owner, and the Ox his Masters crib, There is a kind of gratitude in the beasts by

which

which they acknowledge their benefactors that feed them and cherish them: But we do not acknowledg God, who feedeth us and upholdeth us every moment; *There is no creature made worse by kindness then man*: He that was made to be *Master* of the Creatures, may become their *Scholar*; there is many a good lesson to be learn'd in their School.

3. Redemption.

3. *Redemption*: As a man when he weigheth a thing; casteth in weight after weight till the scales be counterpoysed; so doth God mercy after mercy to poyse down mans-heart: Here is a *mercy* that is overweight in it self; 1 *John* 4. 10. *Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that God loved us, and sent his Son to be a propitiation for our sins*. If we had had the wisdom to pitch upon such a remedy (as certainly it could not have entred into the hearts of men or * *Angels*) yet we could not have the heart to ask it; It would have seemed a *rude blasphemy* in our prayers, to desire that the Son of God should come out from his Fathers bosome and dye for us; Therefore *herein is love*, that is, this is the highest Expression of Gods love to the creature, not only that *ever was*, but *can be*; For in *love* only God setteth to the uttermost: he never shewed so much of his *Power* and *Wisdoms*, but he can shew more of his *Wrath*, but he hath no greater thing to give then himself, then his *Christ*. At what a dear rate hath the Lord bought our hearts? He needed not; he might have made *nobler creatures* then the present race of men: and dealt with us as he did with the *sinning Angels*, he would not enter into any treaty with them, but the execution was as quick as the *sin*; so the Lord might utterly have cast us off, and made a new race of men to glorifie his *Grace*, leaving *Adam* to propagate the World to glorifie his *Justice*: Or at least he might have redeemed us in another way, (for I suppose 'tis a free dispensation *opus liberi consilii*;) But * *God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son*; He took this way, that we might love *Christ* as well as believe in him: God might have redeemed us in another way, but he could not oblige us so much in another way: He would not only *satisfie his Justice*, but *shew his Love*: 'Twas the Lords design by his Love to deserve ours, and so for ever to shame the creature, if they should not love him. Oh think much of this glorious Instance, the love of God in giving *Christ*, and the love of *Christ* in giving himself.

* *Ephes*. 3. 10.

* *John* 3. 16.

himself. When the *Seawrough* and was tempestuous, and *Jonah* saw the storm, he said, *Cast me into the Sea, and it shall be calm to you*; but the storm was raised for his own sake. Now Christ when he saw the misery of mankind, he said, *Let it come on me*; We raised the storm, but Christ would be cast in to allay it. If a Prince passing by an Execution should take the Malefactors Chains, and suffer in his stead, this would be a wonderful instance indeed: Why? *Christ hath born our sorrows and carried our griefs*, *Isai. 53. 4.* the very same griefs that we should have suffered, so far as his holy Person was capable of them: his *desertion* was equivalent to our loss, his *agonies* to our curse and punishment of sense; and all this very willingly for the sake of sinners. 'Tis notable, he doth with like indignation rebuke Peter, dissuading him from sufferings, as he doth the Devil tempting him to Idolatry, *Get thee behind me Satan*, compare *Matt. 16. 22.* with *Matt. 4. 10.* He is well pleased with all his sorrows and sufferings, so he may gain the Church, and espouse her to himself in a firm League and Covenant: *Isai. 53. 11.* *He shall see the travel of his Soul, and be satisfied*; as if he said, *Welcome Agonies*, welcome Death, welcome Curse, so poor Souls be saved! As Jacob counted the dayes of his labour nothing, so he might obtain Rachel; and yet there is a vast difference between the love of Christ and the love of Jacob: Rachel was lovely, but we are vile and unworthy creatures; and Christ's love is infinite, even beyond his sufferings and the outward expressions of it; as the windowes of the Temple were more large and open within then without. Well then, every one of Christ's wounds is a mouth open to plead for love; He made himself so vile, that he might be more dear and precious to us: Certain'y if Love brought Christ out of Heaven to the Cross, to the Grave, should it not carry us to Heaven? to God? to Christ, who hath been so gracious to us? Thus God hath deserved our love.

The third and next Argument is, *God hath desired it*: Whith 3. God hath doth the Lord see in our hearts that he should desire them? If a desired it. Prince should not only make love to a vile and abject creature, but seek all means to gain her affection, you would count her very forward and unthankful to give him the denial. Christ doth not only oblige us, but woo us: If man were such as he should

be, he would not need *enforcements*, because of the *multitude of his obligations*; and if the Lord did deal with us as we deserve, he would *slight* us and *scorn* us, rather than *woo* us: He doth not *want lovers*, there are *Angels* enough in Heaven, whose wills and affections cleave to him perfectly; yea God doth not need the love of any creature, all this wooing is for *our sakes*; Wherein can frail men be beneficial to God? What increase of happiness hath he if all men should love him? 'Tis his happiness to love himself, and he would have us to share in this happiness; therefore he *threateneth*, and *promiseth*, and *beseecheth*: As one that would gladly open a door, trieth key after key, till he hath tried every key in the bunch: so doth God try one method after another to work upon mans heart.

1. Threateneth. He *threateneth Eternal Torments* if we doe not love him: 1 Cor. 36.22. *If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha*: The form of speech implyeth the most dreadfull curse that may be: 'Tis not arbitrary, whether you will love him or no; you are either to love him, or to perish eternally. Among men if love doth not come kindly, we neglect it; that which is forced is nothing worth: yet the Lord is so earnest after the love of the Creature, that he would have it by any means.

2. Promiseth. He *promiseth*: We have not only mercies *in hand*, but mercies *in hope*; not only *obligations*, but *promises*. 'Tis our duty to love God if there were no Heaven; our *obligations* might suffice: yet *what great things hath God provided for them that love him*? 1 Cor. 2.9. If a man should *sell* his love, he cannot have a better Chapman then God, who is most *rich and liberal*. If an earthly Potentate should promise to them that love him *half his Kingdom*, he would find *lovers enough*. God hath promised glory, the Kingdom of Heaven, and shall we not take him at his word? The Lord will give a gift for a gift; because he hath given us to love him, therefore he will give us Heaven as the reward of love. Who ever heard that an hungry man was hired to eat? and rewarded for tasting dainty food? or a thirsty man for drinking? The love of God is so excellent a privilege, that we should endure all torments to obtain it; and yet God hath promised a reward: yea he is also pleased to bar-

bargain with us, as if he were our *equal*, and we were altogether free before the *Contract*.

Again, *He beseecheth*: We are cold and backward, therefore *3. Beseecheth*; he useth intreaty upon intreaty, as if he were impatient of a denial: Out of what rock was man hewn? God himself cometh a *wooing*, and we have the face to give him a *repulse*: and what doth he *woo* for? but *our hearts*, which are his already by every kind of right and title: *Prov. 23. 26. My son, give me thy heart.* God is pleased to call that a *gift*, which is indeed a *debt*: Though the heart be *due*, yet God will put his honour upon the creatures, to receive it from them in the way of a *gift*: 'Tis but equity *give to God the things that are Gods.* Look upon the heart, if any could make it, but God himself; *whose image and superscription doth it bear?* Wilt thou refuse to surrender up to God his right? God hath *made* it, *bought* it, and yet he *beggeth* it. When thou hast been as earnest with God, and asked any thing regularly of him, did he deny thee? 'Tis no benefit to him; he desireth the heart of the creature, not that he may be happy, but that he may be *liberal*: he would have thy heart that he may make it better. How easily do we give up our affections to any thing but God, who hath the best title to them? If the *World* or *Satan* knocketh, we open presently; We are as *wax* to *Satan*, and as *stone* to *God*; exorable and easie to be intreated by any carnall motion: as some hard stones cannot be wrought upon but by their own dust; so men are *facile* only to their *corruptions*, to their *own lusts*, not to the *motions of Gods Spirit*.

Fourthly, *The nature of Love sheweth that 'tis fit for nothing but God*: He hath given us the faculty and disposition, that we may close with himself. He that looketh upon an *ox* will say, 'twas made to cut; and he that looketh on love will say, 'twas made for God. What is the *genius* and disposition of Love? Love sheweth Love is nothing but an *earnest bent and strong motion of the Soul*, to what is good for us: Every man hath an inclination in his nature to what he conceiveth to be good, *Psal. 4. 9.* and grace doth only direct and set it right: All the difference between Nature and Grace is in fixing the *chiefest good* and the *most end*; One great blessing of the Covenant is a *new heart*, that is, a new and right placing of our affections. We 1 then, God is sure-

num bonum, the *chiefest Good*; even *Nature* cannot be *satisfied* without him, but *Grace* findeth *all contentment* in him: If there be *any good* in the *creatures*, 'tis *originally* in him; He is the *Fountain of Living Waters*, where comforts are *sweetest* and *freest*. The heart hunteth after good among the *creatures*, which is but an *image* and *ray* of that *perfection* which is in *God*; and who would leave the *substance* to follow the *shadow*? and prize the *picture* to the *disdain* of the *person* whom it represents? 'Twere easie to prove that *God* is the *only proper, eternal, all-sufficient good* of the *Soul*: and if the heart were not perverted and *byassed* with carnal desires to *other objects*, it would *directly move* to *God*, as all things do to their *center*; I say, were it not for sin, we should no more need be pressed to *love God*, then to *love our selves*: There need no great motives to press us to love our selves. *Nature* is prone enough of its own accord; and if *Nature* had remained in that purity wherein it was created, it would move to *God* of its own accord; as all things move to their *center* and there they rest. Now *God* is the *Center* of the *Soul*: The *Soul's* good is not *honours, pleasures, profits*: the *Soul* is a *spirit*, and must have a *spiritual good*; 'tis *immortal*, and it must have an *eternal good*. By experience we find that our affections are never in their *due posture*, but are like members out of joyn (or the arms when they hang backward) when they are not fixed upon *God*; therefore there is a *restlessness* and *dissatisfaction* in the *Soul*: We † grope and feel about for happiness, and cannot find it; like *Noahs Dove*, we hover up and down, and find no place whereon the sole of our foot should rest. Well then, if *God* be the *only allsufficient Good* of the *Soul*, why doe not we love him more? If he be the *Center of the Soul*, why doe not we move *directly* thither? 'Tis a shame that a *stone* should be carried with greater force to its center, then we to *God*; by its *natural course* it falleth downward, and breaketh all things in the way, yea though it self be broken in pieces: But alas, how little do we break through impediments to go to *God*? 'Twere a miracle to see a *stone* stopped in the *Air* by a feather: But now every vain thing keepeth us off, and intercepts our affections; sin hath given us *another center*, and after grace received we hang too much that way. Again, As love is for *Good*, so 'tis for *one Object*; like a *Pyramide*, it ends in a point; *affection* is weakened by

* Dominus feci-
sti nos proprie-
ter, & iniqui-
tatem est cor
nostrum donec
perveniat ad te
Aug.
† Acts 17. 26,
27.

by *dispersion*; as a River by being turned into many channels : In conjugal love (where friendship is to the height) there is but one that can share in it, that's the Law of Nature; *Mal. 2. 15. Did he not make one? yet he had the residue of spirit*: the meaning is, that God made but *one man* for *one woman*, though he had *spirit enough* to make more; 'twas not out of defect of power, but wise choice, that their affections to one another might be the stronger, which otherwise would be weakn'd; as they are in the brutes scattered promiscuously to several objects: so the true Object of love is *one God*; he is loved for himself, and other things for his sake. Once more, The force and vehemency of love sheweth that it was made for God; Love is the *vigorous bent* of the Soul, and full of heights and excesses, which if diverted to other objects, would make us *guilty of Idolatry*, we should place them in the room of God: Still we find, that men are besotted with that they love; as *Sampson* was led about like a child by *Dalilah*: all conveniences of life, pleasures, profits, are contemned for the enjoyment of the *thing beloved*: Now those are heights proper to the Divinity, to the infinite Majesty of God; To whom else is this *vehemency* and this *self-denial* due? If we lavish it upon the creatures, we make *gods* of them; and therefore *covetousness* is called *Idolatry*, *Ephes. 5. 3.* and the Sensualist is said to make *his belly his god*, *Phil. 3. 19.* There is such an excess, such a doating in love, that if we be not careful in fixing it, before we are aware we run into *practical Idolatry* and *practical Atheism*. There is an *Atheism in the heart*, as well as in the judgment: *Atheism in the judgment*, is when we are not convinced of the Being of God; In the heart, when our affections are not set on God: this is more incurable, because the *dogmatical Atheist* may be convinced by reason, but the *practical Atheist* can only be reformed by grace. Thus the Nature of Love sheweth it.

Fifthly, the Nature of the Saints sheweth it; the *new nature* hath new affections; it bewrapeth it self by the *new heart*, as well as by the *renewed mind*, *Rom. 12. 2.* There are not only *new thoughts*, but *new desires* and *new delights*, desires after God, and a *delight* in God, as the *Fountain of Holiness*. When we come to God at first, we love him out of spiritual interest, for ease and comfort, and the benefit we gain by him; Christ alloweth it, *Come to me, and I will give you ease*, *Mat. 11. 28.* When

Argument;
from the nature and disposition of the Saints.

fire is first kindled, there is as much *smoke* as *flame*, but afterwards it burneth brighter and brighter by degrees: A Fountain as soon as digged runneth *muddy* at first, but afterwards the Stream groweth more *pure* and *clear*. So doth the love of the Saints; at first 'tis but a *love of interest*, but by acquaintance we love him out of a *principle of the new nature*, for his *Holiness* and *Excellency*, because that which is in us in part, is in God by way of *eminency* and *perfection*. Certainly *likeness* must needs beget *love*, and the *Saints* being conformed to God delight in him; so that their love floweth not so much from *profit* and *interest*, as *grace*: yea at length out of a *vehement complacency* of the *new nature* they love *holiness* above *happiness* or *spiritual interest*;

* si hic peccati
pulorem illis
inferni horro-
rem, &c.
Asclm.

* Psal. 31. 13.

* Eadem velle
et nolle ea
demura vera est
amicitia.
Sicut.

† Prov. 8. 13.
Rev. 2. 6.

Use.

Evidences of
our love to
God.

1. Evidence
God will be
loved alone.

and * *Hell* is not so bad as *sin* in their account: there cannot be a worse *Hell* to them than *unkindness* to *God*, or *grieving his Spirit*; and *Heaven* is amiable to *God's* sake, because he is *loved* there and *enjoyed* there; there are none of *God's* enemies in *Heaven*, and there they shall serve him and cleave to him without *weariness* and *wandering*. Well then, There is such a disposition * in the *Saints* to love *God*, which ariseth not only from *hope*, because of the *great benefit* which we expect from him; nor only from *gratitude*, or the *sense of his love* already shewed; but from an *inclination of the new nature*, and that *sympathy* and * *likeness* that is between us, because we † *hate what he hateth*, and *love what he loveth*; and because *God* is the *original Fountain* and *Samplar of Holiness*.

Well then, *Saints* mind your work. Do you indeed love *God*? *Christ* puts *Peter* to the question thrice, *John* 21: A deceitful heart is apt to abuse you: Ask again and again, *Do I indeed love God*? Evidences are these,

1. If you love *God*, he will be loved *alone*; those that do not give *all* to *God*, give *nothing*; he will have the *whole heart*: If there were *another God*, we might have some excuse for our *reservations*; but since there is but *one God*; he must have *all*, for he doth not love *inmates*. When the *Harbingers* take up an house for a *Prince*, they turn out *all*; none must remain there, that there may be room for his greatness: So *all* must avoid, that *God* may have the *sole possession* of our hearts. The *Devil* that hath no right to any thing would have a *part*, for by that means he knoweth the *whole* will fall to him; *Conscience* will not let him

him have *fall*, and therefore he would have a *part*, to keep possession: as *Pharaoh* stood hauking with *Moses* and *Aaron*; if not the *Israelites*, then their *little ones*; if not their *little ones*, then their *herds*; if not their *herds*, then their *flocks*: but *Moses* telleth him there was not an *hoof* to be left. So *Satan*, if he cannot have the *outward man*, yet he would have the *heart*; if there be not room enough in the *heart* for every *lust*, then he craveth *indulgence* in some things that are *less odious* and *distant*; if *Conscience* will not allow *drunkenness*, yet a little *worldliness* is pleaded for as no great matter: But the *love* of *God* cannot be in that heart, where the *world* reigneth. *Dagon* and the *Ark* could not abide in the *same Temple*; nei her can the heart be divided between *God* and *Mammon*. All men must have *some Religion* to mask their pleasures and carnal practices, that they may be favourable to their *lusts* and *interests* with less remorse; and usually they order the matter so, that *Christ* shall have their *Consciences*, and the *world* their *hearts* and *affections*: But alas, they do not consider that *God* is jealous of a *Rival*; when he cometh into the heart, he will have the *room empty*. 'Tis true, we may love other things in *subordination* to *God*, but not in *competition* with *God*, that is, when we love *God* and other things for *Gods sake*, in *God* and for *God*. When a Commander hath taken a strong *Castle*, and placed a *Garrison* in it, he suffereth none to enter but those of his *own side*, keeping the gate shut to his enemies: So we must open the heart to none but *God*, and those that are of *Gods party and side*, keeping the gate shut to others: We may love the *creatures* as they are of *Gods side*, as they draw our hearts more to *God*, or engage unto be more *cheerful in service*, or give us *greater advantages* of doing good; Of what party are they? Bring nothing into thy heart, and allow nothing there, that is contrary to *God*. When *Sarah* saw *Ishmael* scoffing at *Isaac*, she thrust him out of doors: So when riches, and honour, and the *love of the world* upbraid you with your *love to God*, as if you were a *fool* to stand so nicely upon terms of *Conscience*, &c. when they incroach and allow *Christ* no room but in the *Conscience*, 'tis time to thrust them out of doors, that the *Lord* alone may have the preeminence in our Souls.

2. This love must be demonstrated by *solid Effects*, such as are;

1. Evidence.
The Effects of
Love.

Hatred of sin. 1. An hatred of sin, *Psal. 97. 10. Ye that love the Lord, hate an evil: With love: to the chiefest good, there will be an hatred of the chiefest evil.* Friends have common loves (as I said) and common aversations: Upon every carnal motion doth thy heart recoil upon thee, and say, *How can I do this wickedness, and sin against God? Gen. 39. 9. or else, Is this thy kindness to thy friend? or after such a deliverance as this, &c. Ezra 9. 13.* Love to God will be interposing and crossing every carnal motion.

2. By a delight in obedience; *1 John 5. 3. This is love, that we keep his Commandments, and his Commandments are not grievous.* Nothing is difficult and tedious to him that hath any affection to his work. As the Prophet cured the bitterness of the wild gourds by casting in meal; so mingle but a little love with your work, and the bitterness is gone. *Sechem* yieldeth to be circumcised for *Dinab's* sake, because he loved her; and *Jacob* endured his seven years service for *Rachels* sake: so will love make us obey God cheerfully in things contrary to our natural inclination. Love and labour are often coupled in * Scripture; and those that left their first works, had lost their first love, *Rev.*

* 1 Thel. 1:3.
Heb. 6. 10.

3. Delight in
Gods presence,
and grief for
his absence.

2. 4. 5.
3. Delight in Gods presence, and grief for his absence: or an holy sensibleness both of his accesses and recesses, so and from the Sou: Can a man love God, and be content without him? If you lose but a Ring which you affect, how are ye troubled till it be found again? *Ye have taken away my gods* (saith he) *and do you ask, What aileth thee?* *Judg. 18. 24.* So when God is withdrawn, all visits of love and influences of grace are suspended, and they have no communion with him in their duties, should they not mourn? See *Mat. 9. 15.* Is spiritual love without all kind of passion? or are they Christians that are stupid and insensate, and never take notice of Gods coming and going?

Helps.

These are the Evidences; I shall only now suggest two Helps to keep up and increase this love to God, and I have done with this Argument.

1. Prize nothing that cometh from God, unless thou canst see his love in it. God giveth many gifts to wicked men, but he doth not give them his love. The possession of all things will do us no good, unless we have God himself; other mercies may;

may be salved with a curse. Gods children are not satisfied till they can see him and enjoy him in every comfort and mercy. Esau was reconciled to Jacob, and therefore Jacob saith, Gen. 33, 10. *I have seen thy face as the face of God*; 'Twas a token and pledge of the gracious face of God smiling on him. Hezekiah was delivered out of a sickness, and then he doth not say, *Thou hast delivered me from the grave*; but, *Thou hast loved me from the grave*, Isai. 38. 17.

2. *Prize nothing that you return to God, unless there be love in it.* We accept a small gift where the party loveth, and otherwise the greatest is refused: *If I give my body to be burned, and have not love, &c.* 1 Cor. 13. 1. Love is an act of grace by itself; other duties are not acts of grace, unless they come from love; as Alms, Fasting, Prayer, Martyrdom, &c. they are all nothing *ἐάν ἔσται* (saith the Apostle) *I am not only little, but nothing*; On the other side, small things are made great by love; as a cup of cold water, a poor womans mite, they are accepted as coming from love.

So much for the matter of the Prayer; We come now to the manner or degree of enjoyment, [*Be multiplied*:] From whence note, *That we should not seek grace at the hands of God, but the increase and multiplication of it.* In managing this Point, I shall first give you *Reasons* to perswade you to look after growth in grace: Secondly, I shall give you some observations concerning it; and so thirdly, come to some Application.

First, The *Reasons* are these. 1. Where there is life there will be growth; and if grace be true, it will surely increase. A painted flower keepeth alwayes at the same pitch and stature; the Artist may bestow beauty upon it, but he cannot bestow life: A painted child will be as little ten years hence as it is now. So a pretence of Religion alwayes keeps at the same stay; yea when their first heats are spent, they are fearfully blasted: But now they that have true grace are compared to a living plant, which increaseth in bulk and stature, Psal. 92. 12, 13. and to a living child, which groweth by receiving kindly nourishment, 1 Pet. 2. 2. Therefore 'tis not enough to get peace and love, but we must get them multiplied.

2. If we do not grow, we go backward, Heb. 6. compare the first:

first with the fourth vertie, *Let us go on to perfection*; and then presently he treateth of *Apistacy*: We cannot *keep* that which we have receiv'd, if we do not labour to *increase* it. They that row *against the stream* had need ply the Oar, lest the force of the waters carry them backward; or as he that goeth up a *sandy hill* sinketh down if he go not go forward, *Mat. 25*. He that would not *improve* his talent *lost* it: So here, we *waste* and *consume* what we have, if we do not *improve* it. 'Tis dangerous to rest *fast*, and never go further; there is no stay in Religion: all the *Angels* on *Jacobs ladder* were either *ascending* or *descending*, continually in motion: There are no *stinted trees* in Canaans garden; if they leave off to grow, they prove *doomed* or *rotten trees*. An active nature, such as mans is, must either grow *worse* or *better*; therefore we should be as *careful* after the *increase* of *grace*, as we would be *cautions* of the *loss* of *grace*.

* *Minime bonus est qui melior fieri non vult.*
Bernardus.

3. 'Tis an ill sign to be contented with a *little grace*: * He was never good, that doth not desire to *grow better*: Spiritual things do not cloy in the enjoyment; He that hath once tasted the *sweetness* of *grace*, hath Arguments enough to make him seek further, and desire more *grace*: *every degree* of holiness is as desirable as the *first*; therefore there can be no *true holiness* without a desire of *perfect holiness*: God giveth *us* a taste to this end and purpose, that we may long for a *fuller draught*; as the *clusters of Canaan* brought to *Israel* in the *wilderness* made them put on for the Country: They are *Hypocrites*, and sure to be *Apostates*, that are contented with a taste, *Heb 6*.

4. Because we cannot have *too much grace*: there is no *nimis* in the internals of Religion; you cannot have too much *knowledge*, too much *love of God*, too much of the *fear of God*. In the outward part there may be too much done, and then it proveth *will-worship* and *superstition*. The *Apottle* saith, *2 Pet. 1. 11. That we must give diligence, that an abundant entrance may be ministered to us into the everlasting Kingdom of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ*. Some are *far off* from the Kingdom of God, as persons ignorant and touched with no care of Religion: * Some come near but never enter, as *semi-convert* and men of a *blameless life*; these *cheapen*, but do not *buy*, and go through with the bargain: others enter, but with greater difficulty, are *scarcely saved*, *1 Pet. 4. 18. saved as by fire. 1 Cor. 3. 13.* they make

† *Ephes. 2. 13.*

* *Mat. 12. 14.*

Acts 16. 18.

in hard shift to go to Heaven, and have only grace enough to keep body and soul together (as we say) not a jot to spare: Others enter with full sails, or as 'tis said, they have an abundant entrance ministred to them, and yet all is but little enough; Spiritual things cannot exceed measure. But you will say, 'Tis said, Eccles. 7. 16. *Be not righteous over much.* I answer, Either 'tis meant of an opinionative righteousness, be not too righteous in thine own conceit; or rather of an indiscreet heat, or a rigid and sullen severity, without any temper of wisdom and moderation; otherwise in real holiness, there can never be enough.

5. God hath provided for them that grow in grace a more ample reward; according to our measures of grace, so will our measures of glory be; for they that have most grace are vessels of a larger capacity, others are filled according to their size; * 'Tis indeed a question whether there be degrees of glory yea or no; But I suppose it may easily be determined, *He that soweth sparingly shall reap sparingly*, whereas others have their bosoms full of sheaves: it is a man with a little grace should get to Heaven, yet he hindereth his own performance; Who would have a thin crop, and a lean harvest?

6. It suiteth with our present state; here we are in a state of progress and growth, not of rest and perfection: Grace is not given out at once, but by degrees: Christ saith, John 17. 26. *I have declared thy Name, and will declare it: and John 1. 50. Believest thou? thou shalt see greater things then these;* There is more to come, therefore let us not rest in our first experiences: Paul saith, *I have not attained.* Phil. 3. When grace is wrought, yet there is nothing lacking: He is a foolish builder that would rest in the middle of his work; and because the foundation is laid, is careless of the superstructure. The state of the Saints is expressed by a growing light, Prov. 4. 18. As long as there is want, there should be growth; see 1 Thes. 4. 1.

7. Seeking the increase and multiplication of spiritual gifts suiteth best with the bounty and magnificence of God. The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit have rich grace for us; and we are most welcome, when we seek for most plenty: God the Father is represented as rich in mercy Ephes. 2. 4. Rom. 10. 12. We can never exhaust the Treasuries of Grace, and impoverish the Exchequer

* See span.
herm. Dub.
Evang. parit
31 Dub. 136.
& alias passim.

chequer of Heaven : So Christ hath a *rich* and *full* merit, 2 Cor. 8.9. *to make us rich, &c.* God the Son aimed at it in all his sufferings and condescensions, that he might make a large purchase for us, and we might not be straitned in grace. The Spirit of God is poured out *plentifully, richly, Tit. 3.6.* There is *mercy enough* in God the Father, *merit enough* in God the Son, *efficacy enough* in God the Spirit : God is not wanting, if we be not wanting to our selves. If a *mighty King* should open his Treasure, and bid men come and bring their bags, and take as much as they would : do you think they would neglect this occasion of gain ? surely no ; they would run and fetch bag after bag, and never cease. Thus doth the Lord do in the Covenant of Grace ; you will rather want *vessels* than *treasure*.

8. 'Tis a necessary piece of gratitude : we would have *mercy* to be multiplied, and therefore we should take care that *Peace* and *Love* be multiplied also, we would have God *add to our blessings*, and therefore we should *add to our graces* ; see 2 Pet. 1.5. When we have *food* we would have *cloathing*, and when we have *cloathing* we would have *house* and *harbour*, and when we have *all these things*, we would have them in *greater proportion* ; the like care should we then in gracious enjoyments : When we have *Knowledge*, we should adde *Temperance*, and when we have *Temperance*, we should adde *Patience*, &c.

9. We may learn of our Lord Jesus to whom we must be conformed in all things, Luc. 2. 40. *He grew in wisdom and stature* : the meaning is, his *humane capacity* was enlarged by degrees according to his *progress in age and strength*, for in all things he was *like us except sin*, and our reason is ripned and perfected together with our *age*.

10. We may learn of worldly men, who * *joyn house to house, and field to field*, and are never satisfied : So there is an *holy covetousness* in spiritual things when we joyn * *faith to faith*, and obedience to obedience, one degree to another : our Blessings are better, and the *chiefest good* should not be followed with a *slack hand* ; * is our happiness to enjoy the *infinite God*, and therefore we should not set a *stint* and *limit* to our desires ; with what arts and methods of increase doth a covetous man seek to advance himself ? he liveth more by hope than by *memory*,
and

* Isay 5. 8.

* Rom. 1. 17.

and what he hath seemeth nothing to what he expelleth : So should we * forget the things that are behinde, and reach forth * *Phil. 3. 14.* to the things that are before us : A covetous man seemeth the poorer, the more he hath gotten ; so should we grow humble with every injoyment : *tis a good degree of grace, to see how much we want grace : A covetous man maketh it the main work and business of his life to increase his estate ; He goeth to bed late, riseth early, eateth the bread of sorrows, and all for a little self, the strength of lust should shame us ; should we not make Religion the business of our lives, and our great employment ? shall we be as insatiable as the grave to the world, when a little grave serveth the turn ?

Secondly, the next thing which I am to do, is to give you some 2. *Observ.* Observations concerning growth in grace ; they are these : 1. To discern growth, there is required some time, a total change, is far more sensible than growth ; that may be in an instant, then a sinner, now a Saint ; but there must be a competent time to judge of our growth, we cannot discern it by single acts, so much as by the greater portions of our lives. † We cannot so easily find † *ascendo* out how we grow by every Sermon, as by comparing our past *non volando* estate with our present : we do not fly to the top of Jacobs ladder, *ascenditur* but go up step by step ; *Tis a work of time ; and so we may judge *summitas scale* of our not growing, if after a long time we are where we were, *Bernard.* under the power of the same prejudices, or the same doubts, or the same lusts (still, see Heb. 5. 12.

Secondly, In the growing of Saints there is much difference ; all the plants in Christs Garden are not of a like height and stature, some that are more publicly useful have their *five sa-* lons, others but two ; some thrive more and grow of a sudden, *2 Thess. 1. 3.* Your faith grew exceedingly ; others are weak and slow, and yet they are fruitful. We all grow according to the measure of a part. *Ephes. 4.* That is, according to the rate of that part which we sustain in the body ; a finger groweth not to the quantity of an arm, they all grow, but the growth of all is not equal.

Thirdly. Growth in Grace is alwayes accompanied with growth in knowledge, *1. Pet. 3. 18.* But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, &c. Plants that grow out of the Sunne send us a longer stalk, but the

fruit is worse: some Christians pitch all their care upon the growth of love, and take no pains to grow in knowledge; but this is not right, we should alwayes follow on to know the Lord, *Hosea 6. 3.* We reade that Christ grew in knowledge, we do not reade that he grew in grace: Gods choicest Saints are alwayes bettering their Notions of God; *Moses* his first request was, *Tell me thy name, Exod. 4.* and afterwards, *show me thy Glory, Exod. 33.* Our fairest portion in Heaven is the satisfaction of the Understanding with the knowledge of God: therefore if we would have grace multiplied, it must be through the knowledge of God, *2 Pet. 1. 2.* the more shine, the more warmth.

Fourthly, Growth of knowledge, in the growing and increase, is less sensible then the growth of Grace, but afterward more sensible; as a Plant increaseth in length and stature, though we do not see the progress, but afterwards we know that it hath grown: growth in grace is alwayes cum lucta with many assaults, and so more sensible, whereas the work upon the Understanding is more still and silent; draw away the Curtain and the light cometh in without any more stir, our ignorance vanisheth silently and without such strife as goeth to the raming of carnal affections: but afterwards 'tis more sensible, for we have not alwayes a spiritual feeling, but the effects of knowledge are standing and permanent, *Eph. 5. 8.* *Ye were darkness, but now are light in the Lord.*

Fifthly, Progress in knowledge is rather in degrees, than in parts and matters known: I mean, it consisteth not so much in knowing new truths, as in a greater proportion of light; yet I say 'tis rather not altogether, for a man may walk in present practices which future light may disprove and retract; but usually the increase of a Christian is rather in the measure of knowledge than in knowing new things, the light shineth more and more, *Prac. 4.* I know God more, Christ more, the vanity of the world more, the odiousness of sin more, that is more practically, and in another manner then I did before: old Principles are improved and perfected: I speak this because of the danger to which men expose themselves by expecting new light, keeping the soul from an establishment in present Principles, and looking for new Truths to be revealed to them.

6. Of all Graces we need most to grow in Faith, 1 Thess. 3. 10. I desire to see you, that I may perfect that which is lacking in your Faith. Luke 17. 5. Lord increase our Faith: and Mark 9. 24. Lord I believe, help my unbelief: Faith is most defective, our Assent is tremulous, our Affiance weak; and Faith is most assaulted. All the Temptations of Sathan tend to weaken your Faith: and all other Graces depend upon the increase of Faith.

7. Growth in parts and gifts must headfully be distinguished from growth in Grace: many may grow in parts, that go back in Grace; you can only discern a meer growth in parts and gifts by pride and self-ends; knowledge puffeth up; 1 Cor. 8. 2. When men grow in abilities and grow more proud and carnal, 'tis a sad symptome.

8. The infallible signs of growth in Grace are three. When we grow more spiritual, more solid, more humble.

1. More spiritual; the growth of wicked men is in spiritual wickedness let's debauched, but more malicious; so will our growth in grace be discerned by our spirituality in our aims, when our ends are more elevated to Gods glory, &c. In our grounds and principles, as when we resist sin out of love to God: and as 'tis contrary to his purity and holiness, and when we are carried out against inward corruptions, such as the world doth not take notice of; not only against sins, but lusts and thoughts, for that argueth more light and more love, so when we regard the spirituality of duties: serving the Lord in the Spirit: so when we relish the more spiritual part of the Word, plain and solid preaching, rather then such as is garish and full of the pomp of words, 1 Cor. 2. 6. We speak wisdom among those that are perfect, the trappings of an ordinance are baits to take the more carnall sort of hearers; * Plutarch in his Treatise of growth in moral virtue, wherein are many notable things applicable to growth in Grace; saith, that a man that hath made some progress in virtue is like a Physitian, that coming into a Garden, he doth not consider flowers for their beauty, as Gallants doe, but for their use and virtue in medicine; So he doth not consider speech for its fineness but fitness, and seasonableness to present use; The same holdeth good also in growth in Grace; the more we grow, the more we regard the Spiritual part of

* See Plutarch in his Treatise of the true and good life.
ἀρετῆς τῆς ἀπο-
στολῆς ἐστὶν ἀρετὴ.

the Word, and such as is of a practical use and concernment.

2. *More solid and judicious*, Phil. 1. 9. *I pray God, your love may abound more and more in all judgement*: there is a * *childishness* in religion as well as nature, when we are led altogether by *fancy and affection*, but afterward we grow more *prudent, sober and solid*: Growth then is not to be measured by intenseness and vigour of affection that goeth and cometh, and in the *influence of Grace* our affections are most warm and pregnant: * A *young Tree* may have *more leaves and blossoms*, but an *old Tree* is more deeply rooted; and *young Christians* seem altogether to be made up of *will and affections*, and *forerunning notions*, but have less of *judgement and solidity*, many times of *sinning*; as men in a deep thirst take down what is offered to them to drink before they discern the taste of it, so acts of *will* outstart the *understanding*; but in *old men*, *nature being spent*, and through long acquaintance with Religion, there are not such quick and lively motions; the one are *sick of love*, have more qualms & agonies; the other are more rooted in *love*, and grow more *firm, constant, solid, ratiomall and wise*, in ordering the Spiritual life.

3. *More humble*, as 'tis a good progress in learning to know our ignorance; they that have but a smattering are most *conceited*. *Plutarch*, in the fore-mentioned Treatise, tells us of the saying of * *Athenodorus*, that those that went to study at Athens, at first seemed to themselves to be wise, afterwards, only lovers of *Wisdom*, then *Orators*, such as could speak of *Wisdom*: Last of all, *rude, and knowing nothing*, with the increase of learning, still laying aside their pride and arrogance: so 'tis with those that grow in grace, by acquaintance with God light is increased and made more *reflexive*, and they are more sensible of their obligations to God, and so are more *tender*, and by long experience are better acquainted with their own hearts; and that's the reason why we have such humble acknowledgements from them; Paul a sanctified vessel, yet calleth himself *chiefest of sinners*, 1 Tim. 1. 15; and *less than the least of the Saints*, Ephes. 3. 8. And *Agur*, Prov. 30. 2, 3. *Surely I am more brutish than any man, I have not the understanding of a man, I have neither learned Wisdom, nor have the knowledge of the Holy*: So if you did over-hear the secret confessions of the Saints to God, you would think

* Young men if they know their hearts have cause to complain of Hypocritie, as old men of deadness. Mr. Thomas Goodwin, in a Treatise of growth in Grace.

* Καταπλήν
γὰρ ἔην τὸς
πολλοὺς ἐπὶ
σοφίᾳς Ἀθῆ-
ναίς εὐφρο-
νὴς πρῶτον,
εἰτα γινώσκαι
φιλοσοφίας,
εἰτα, ῥητορίας
τῇ δὲ χρεὶν
ἐπειροῦν
ἐπιτάτας, ὅσοι
Μάλλον ἄν-
τιοῦνται τῷ ἁ-
λῶν Μάλλον τῷ
ἁλῶν ἢ ῥῶν
ἁλῶν καὶ ἁλῶν-
δαιμονος.
Plutarchum
ubi supra.

think them the wisest persons in the world, for so they are in their own sense and representations to God.

Ninthly, *The lowest evidences of growth in Grace are longing for food; and being humble for want of growth*: for the first, *Longing for food*, see 1 Pet. 2. 2. life hath a nutritive appetite joyned with it; when that is strong 'tis a sign the soul is healthy, it will grow: as we say of children that take the dug kindly, they will thrive and do well enough. For the second, *humble for want of growth*, see Mark. 24. *Help my unbelief*: 'tis a sign you mind the work, and are sensible of spiritual defects, which is a great advantage.

Tenthly, Growth is the special fruit of the Divine Grace, *God giveth the increase*, 1 Cor. 3. 6. Plants thrive better by the dew of Heaven, than when they are watered by hand: Grace that is necessary to every action is much more necessary to every degree; in the Text the Apostle doth not exhort, but pray, *mercy peace and love be multiplied*, our endeavours are necessary. As ploughing and digging are necessary, but the Blessing cometh from above. These are the Observations, let us now apply all.

First, let us be earnest with God for this increase, he hath the use of riches of glory, Eph. 3. 16. which we cannot exhaust. You honour God when you go for more, you want more, and he can give more; when men are contented with a little, 'tis a sign either of hardness of heart, they are not sensible of their wants; or of unbelief, as if God had no higher and better thing to give us.

It sheweth us how far they are from being Christians that cate not for the least Degree of Grace, that do not spend a thought that way, these are farre from the Kingdome of God.

Secondly, That are faine back and have lost the savouriness of life their spirits, and their delight in communion with God; time was when they could not let a day pass without a duty, nor a duty pass without some sensible experience of God, but now can spend whole dayes and weeks and never give God a visit; time was when there could not a carnal motion arise, but they were up in arms against it; but now their hearts swarm with vain thoughts, and they can swallow gross sins without remorse: im-provident.

provident mispence of time was once a great burden, but they have lost their tenderness, and can spend a *Sabbath* unprofitably, and finde no regret: their *vain thoughts* were wont to trouble them; but now not their *carnal practices*; dutie was once sweet, but now their *greatest bondage*: certainly, the *Candle of the Lord* doth not shine upon them, as it did in the *moneths* that are past.

Thirdly, Those that are at a *stay* had need look to themselves; *fainted trees* cumber the ground, and they that go on in a dead powerless course, do hurt rather then good; *lukewarm profession* is but the *picture* of Religion, and painted things do not grow, but keep at the same pitch. If a man were a Christian in good earnest, could he be contented with the *present weakness* of his Faith, imperfection of his Knowledge, with this creeping cold way of obedience?

VERSE III.

VERSE III.

Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write to you of the common salvation, it was needfull for me to write to you, and exhort you, that ye should earnestly contend for the Faith which was once delivered to the Saints.

THE Apostle having dispatched the *salvation*, maketh way for the *matter* of the Epistle; this Verse is the *Preface* to the whole, wherein he proposeth two things:

1. The *occasion* of his writing.
2. The *matter* and *drift* of it.

1. The *occasion* of writing this Epistle, which was double:

1. His *earnestness* in promoting their good; *Beloved, when I gave diligence to write to you of the common salvation.*

2. The *urgency* of the present necessity, [*It was needfull for me to write unto you and exhort you.*]

In assigning his *earnestness* and *zeal* for their good, you may take notice of three things, which I shall explain in their order.

1. A *compellation* of their persons, ἀγαπῆται [*Beloved*]; a term usual in the Apostles writings; the same word is used, 1 *Per.* 2. 11. and there translated, *Dearly beloved*: it noteth not onely that affection which by the *law of nature* we owe to one another, *Rom.* 13. 8. nor that love which by the *law of bounty and kindness* we are bound to render to them that love us, *Matth.* 5. 46. but that *singular love* which we owe to them that are one with us in Christ, which is alwayes expressed by ἀγάπη in Scripture, and we sometimes translate it [*Charity*] often [*Love*] the Rhemists alwayes [*Charity*]; whose tenderness in this point, (as one observeth) is not altogether to be disallowed, lest it be confounded with *common* and *impure love* expressed by ἔως, and [*Charity*] being a Church Word, is wholly free from such *indifferency* and *equivocation*: So here, instead of [*Beloved*] they render [*my Dearest*] which fully noteth the tenderness and *bonds* that are in Christian affection.

From.

Doctrine.

From this compellation observe, *That Christians should be to each other as beloved*; such dearneſs and entireneſs of affection ſhould paſs between them, that they may entitle one another to *their bowels, and choicer reſpects*.

I. Reason.

Reasons are theſe. 1. *None can have better grounds to love another, they are members of the ſame body, 1 Cor. 12. Brothers born of the ſame womb, living in the ſame Family, have deſcended all the feelings of nature, and been divided in intereſt and affection*; but ſurely no ſuch Schiſm can happen in the ſame body; who would uſe an arm to cut off a leg, or an hand to ſcratch out his eyes, *members care for one another*. Now this is the relation which Chriſt hath left us; he hath not only called us into a *Family*, but into a *Body*, Col. 3. 15. See the ſame preſſed together with many other uniting conſiderations, Ephes. 4. 4, 5, 6. verſes. *There is one Body, one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling, one Lord, one Faith, one Baptiſme, one God, and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all*. Let us a little go over that place: The firſt engagement is [*one Body*], they are *Members*, and *monſtrous excreſcencies*, not *members*, that ſuck all the nourishment to themſelves. Again, *one member* lacking, or out of joynt, is a pain and deformity to the *whole*. The next engagement is [*one Spirit*] which in all other relations can only be had in fancy and imagination; friends ſpeak as if they lived by one *common ſoul*, but here 'tis ſo really; all Believers have the *ſame Spirit*; I ſay in other relations (even in the neareſt) every one is acted by his *own ſoul*, but here *by one Spirit we are Baptized into one Body, 1 Cor. 12. 13*. What ſhould divide us when we have the *ſame Spirit*? We have not all the *ſame meaſures*, and that occaſioneth ſome difference; as the Soul ſheweth it's ſelf in ſome members more then in other, though it acts in all, but the Spirit is the ſame. The next conſideration is [*one Hope*]; ſhall not the *ſame earth* contain thoſe that expect to live in the *ſame Heaven*? *Luther and Zuinglius, Cranmer and Hooper, Ridley and Saunders*, ſhall all accord for ever in Heaven; and certainly 'tis through the *reliques of the fleſh* that they cannot accord here: In other relations there may be divisions, becauſe they have *different hopes*, and it may be hopes that intrench and encroach upon the good of each other; but here you have *one Heaven and one Hope*, 'tis all for you; there may be

be a difference in the degree of Glory, but none to *provoke pride, or feed envy*: How will bitter and keen spirits look upon each other, when they meet in glory? It followeth [*one Lord*] We are in the *same family*, how will you look God in the face if you fall *smiting your fellow-servants*? *Matth. 24. 45.* Then [*one Faith*] There may be different apprehensions, and every one may abound in his own sense in *circumstances*, but the *Faith* is the same, they agree in the same *essentials* and *substantials* of Religion: The enemies of the Church, though divided in *interests and opinions*, yet because they agree in one *common hatred* of the Saints, can hold together; *Gabal*, and *Ammon*, and *Amaleck*, and the men of *Tyre*, did all conspire against *Israel*, *Psal. 83.* like *Sampsons Foxes*, though their *faces* looked several ways, yet they were tied one to another by *their tails*, and ran together to burn up the *Cornfields*, and shall not the people of God agree, who all profess *one* and the *same Faith*? The next consideration is [*one Baptisme*] that is, one badge of profession: 'twas a cause of difference among *Jacobs Sons*, that one had a *Coat of divers colours*, a special badge of affection: Consider, you are all brought in by the *Baptism of Water*, and the use of ordinary means, none have a special and privilegiate Call from Heaven above the rest of their Brethren. Lastly, it followeth, [*one God and Father of all*] You all worship the same *God*, there is nothing divides more than *different objects of Worship*: * *Summa utrinque inde* When one *scorneth* what another *adoroth*, 'tis extremely *provoking*; *furor, Vulgo* 'twas the Plea used to *Joseph*, *Gen. 50.* *Pardon the trespasss of quod numina vicinorum odit* the *servants of thy Fathers God*. Thus you see that we have *better* *merque locis.* *juvenalis.* *grounds of love* than others have.

2. None can have *higher motives*; as the *love of Christ*, *Eph. 5. 2.* walk in *love*, as *Christ hath also loved us*; the *Pagan world* was never acquainted with such a motive: Now none are affected and melted with the love of Christ, but those that have an interest in it; therefore Christ expecteth more love from *Christians*, than from others. *Matth. 4. 46.* *If ye love them that love you, what reward shall ye have, do not even the Publicans the same?* The *Publicans* were accounted the most vile and unworthy men in that Age; but a *Publican* would love those of his *own party*; therefore a *Christian* that is acquainted with *Christs love to strangers, to Enemies*, should manage his affe-

tions with more excellency and pureness; the world is not acquainted with the love of Christ, and therefore only loveth its own, but we are acquainted with it, and therefore should love others. See John 13. 34. See that you love one another, as I have loved you. Jesus Christ came from Heaven, not onely to repair and preserve the notions of the Godhead by the greatness of his sufferings, but to propound to us a more exact pattern of Charity, and to elevate duty between man and man.

3. Reason.

3. None have a greater charge, Christ calleth it his New Commandement, John 13. 34. *A new Commandement give I unto you, that ye love one another*: How new, since 'twas as old as the Moral Law, or Law of Nature? I answer, 'tis called new, because excellent, as a new Song, &c. or rather because solemnly and specially renewed by him, and commended to their care, as new things and new Lawes are much esteemed and prized, or enforced by a new reason and example his own death. So John 3. 23. *αὐτὸν ἔστιν ἡ ἐντολή*, This is the Commandement, that we should believe in him whom he hath sent, and love one another, as he gave Commandement: 'Tis made equal with Faith, all the Scriptures aim at Faith and Love; 'twas Christs dying charge, the great charge which he left at his death, John 15. 17. *These things I command you that ye love one another*: Speeches of dying men are receiv'd with most veneration and reverence, especially the charge of dying friends: the Brethren of Joseph fearing lest he should remember the injuries formerly done to him, they use this plea, *Thy Father did command us before he died, saying, &c.* Gen. 50. 16. Let us fulfill the will of the dead: When Christ took leave of his Disciples, he left this as his last charge, think of it when thou art bent to quarrel, or to neglect others: Shall I sleight his last Commandement, his dying charge? 'Tis made the Character of Christs Disciples, *Hereby shall all men know that ye are my Disciples, if ye love one another*; 'tis as much as your Discipleship, &c.

1. Use.

It serveth to press you to this amity and love; why should those that are to meet in the same Heaven, be of such an estranged heart to each other? certainly it cometh from evil. In two cases Gods people can agree well enough, in glory and in misery, in a Prison, as Ridley and Hooper did, and in Heaven as all do; in heaven where there is no sin, and in a Prison where lusts lye low, and

and are under restraint : Oh then labour for *love* and *meekness*, to which end take a few directions. 1 *Honour the least of Christs* *wherever you find it*; if any should despise others for their meanness, it would be more proper to God to do so, than for any other, because they are most distant from his perfection, but he will not despise *smoking Flax*, *Matth. 11.* You do not know what a spark of glory, and of the Divine Nature, may lay hid under *Smock*, and a *covert of darkness*; Christ loved the young man that had but *some accomplishments* of nature in him, *Mark 10. 21* *Jesus loved him*: much more should you, when you find any weak appearances of *Christ*, though they doe not come up to your measures. 2. *Let not difference in opinion divide you*; were to be wished that Believers were of *one heart*, and of *one way*, that they all *thought and spake* the same thing; yet if they differ, cherish them for what of *God* is in them : In a *great Organ* the Pipes are of a *different size*, which maketh the harmony and melody the sweeter ; *Whereunto we have attained, let us walk by the same rule, and minde the same thing*: *Phil. 3. 16.* Many men love to *impropriate Religion*, as if there were nothing of *God* to be found but in their *own sphere* ; 'tis natural to a man to do so, we would be *singular*, and ingross all repute of *Piety, Orthodoxy, and right Worship*, to our selves. 3: *Take heed of letting love degenerate into compliance* : there is the * *Bond of the Spirit*, and * *Eph. 4. 3.* there is an † *unequal yoke*, there are *Cords of Love*, and the † *2 Cor. 6. 4.* *Chain of Antichristian Interests*, and you must be careful to make distinction; *Isa. 54. 15.* *They shall gather together, but not by me*: There are evil mixtures and confederacies that are not of *God*, which you must beware of, lest by *joyning with men* you *break with God*, and turn *love* into *compliance* : The Image was crumbled to pieces, where the toes were mixt of *iron* and *clay*, *Dan. 2.* Love may forbear the *profession* of some truths ; there is an *having faith to our selves*, but must not yield to error.

4. *There are some so vile, that they will scarce come within the circuit of our Christian respect* ; such as are the *open Enemies* of *Christ*, and hold things *destructive* to the foundation of *Religion*, *John Ep. 2. 10.* *If any one bring not this Doctrine, bid him not God speed*: Vile wretches must know the ill fence the Church hath of their practices ; *Elisha* would not have looked upon *Joram*, had it not been for *Jehosaphat*, *2 Kings 13. 4.* When men beak

out into desperate rage and enmity to the wayes of Christ, or run into damnable errors, 'tis a compliance to shew them any countenance. Thus for the compellation.

2. The next circumstance in the occasion is a *testification of the greatness of his love and care* *ἡγάπη καὶ ἐλεος* *ἡγάπη*, When I gave all diligence; he speaketh as if it were his whole care and thought to be helpful to their faith, and therefore did watch every occasion: He addeth [to write to you] that's a farther testimony of his love, that he would think of them absent to write, when he could not speak to them. So that here are two things: 1. The greatness of his love. 2. The way of expressing it by writing.

Doctrine.

From the first [I gave all diligence] observe, That offices of love are most commendable when they are dispensed with care and diligence: 'Tis not enough to do good, but we must do good with labour, and care, and diligence: See Tit. 3. 14. Let ours also learn to maintain good works; in the Original *ἀπολαβὴ καλῶν ἔργων*, watch over good works, hunt out occasions: So Heb. 10. 24. Consider one another, to provoke to love and good works: 'Tis not enough to admonish one another, but we must consider, study one anothers tempers, that we may be most useful in a way of spiritual communion: So Rom. 12. 17. Providing for things honest in the sight of God and men, *προνοήσεις*, catering, contriving, as carnal men do for their lusts, Rom. 13. 14. So for Ministers, 'tis not enough for them to press that wherein they are most versed, or what cometh next to hand, but to study what will most conduce to the ends of their Ministry with such a People; study to approve thy self a good workman, &c. Well then, try your Christian respects by it: the Spirit is most pure, not only when you do good, but when you do it with care and diligence; wicked men may stumble upon good, but they do not study to do good; common spirits are moved to pray, but they do not watch unto prayer, Eph. 6. 17. that is, make it their care to keep their hearts in order, and expressly to suit their prayers to their present necessities; many may do that which is useful to the Church, but they do not watch opportunities, and make it their design to be serviceable.

Again, let no care be grievous to you, so you may do good; I am willing to spend my self, and to be spent for you, 2 Cor. 12. 15.

We

We cannot be wasted in a better employment; so we shine, no matter though we burn down to the Socker, or like Silk-worms, die in our work, *Phil. 2. 17. If I be offered upon the Sacrifice of your faith, I rejoyce with you, &c.* The greatest pains and care, even to a maceration of our selves, should not be displeasing to a gracious heart; certainly this is an expression will shame us; *I gave all diligence, he sought all opportunities, when we will not take them; Love will put us upon searching out, and devising wayes of doing good.*

2. This love he would express by writing when he could not 2. *Observe.* come to them: *Holy men take all opportunities to do good; present or absent, they are still mindfull of the Saints, and write when they cannot speak;* As *Ambrose* alludeth to *Zecharias* writing *loqui non potuit* when he was stricken dumb: A man would think that absence is *Scriptu.* were a fair excuse, a Wit of ease served upon us by providence; yet godly men cannot be so satisfied, but must use all helps to promote the common benefit; a willing mind will never want an opportunity, and they that have an heart will be sure to find an occasion; they give all diligence to promote others welfare; and therefore use all means, take all occasions: Which sheweth, first, how far they are from this temper, that do nothing but by constraints. A ready mind is a special qualification in an Elder, *1 Pet. 5. 2.* and a sure note of our reward, *1 Cor. 9. 7.* But now when the Awe of the Magistrate prevaieth more then love of souls, every thing is done grudgingly: 'Tis *Pauls* advice, *Be instant in season and out of season,* *2 Tim. 4. 2.* not only at such seasons as are fairly offered, but where corruption and laziness would plead an excuse. Christ discouried with the Woman at the Well when weary, *John 4.* We have but a little while to live in the world, and we know not how soon we may be taken off from our usefulness; that was *Peters* motive, to write, *2 Pet. 1. 12. 13.* 2. This sheweth their foolishness that are not careful to redeem opportunities for themselves: *Jude* is studying which way to promote the salvation of others, and many do not look to the state and welfare of their own souls.

Again observe, *That writing is a great help to promote the common Salvation:* by this means we speak to the absent, and to the posterity; and by this means are the Oracles of God preserved in publick Records, which otherwise were in danger of being corrupted,

rupted, if still left to the uncertainty of *verbal tradition* : By this means are errors more *publicly confuted*, and a *testimony* against them transmitted to *future Ages* : *Speech* is more *transient*, but *writing* *remaineth* ; so Christ telleth the Apostles, that they should bring forth fruit, and their fruit should remain, *John 15, 16*. Apostolical Doctrine being committed to writing remaineth as a *constant rule of Faith and manners* ; and by the *publick Explications* of the Church left upon record, we come to understand the *Dispensations of God* to every age, what measures of light they enjoyed, how the truths of God were *opposed*, how *vindicated* ; Finally, by writing the streams of salvation are conveyed into every family as a common fountain by so many pipes and conveyances, that in the defect of publick preaching, good supply may be had in this kind ; Well then, 'tis an acceptable service to the Church, which they do : * *Who can handle the Pen of the Writer*, when they send abroad a *publick Testimony* against Error, a *publick Monument* of their Affection to the Truth ; the *Goose* quill hath smote *Antichrist* under the fifth rib ; the *Earl of Darby* accused *Bradford* for doing more hurt by his writings than preaching. *Hezekiah's* servants are commended for *copying out the Proverbs of Solomon*, *Prov. 25 1*. They deserve not to be censured, but commended and cherished, that do service in this kind ; I confess there is no end of Books, pride and ambition may put many upon scribbling, and filling the world with chaff and vanitie, so that there needeth a restraint, rather than an incitement : * some meerly *blur p per*, which is no small discouragement to *modest and able* men ; * surely care should be taken to prevent abuse : *writing* is a more publick way of teaching, and men should not under take it without a calling. *Hieroms* advice is good, *Ne ad scribendum cito pro-silias, & levi ducas insaniam, multo tempore disce quod doceas. Hier. ad Rusticum Mohachium*. Be not too hasty to write ; that which is prepar'd for full *check* instruction had need be prepar'd with great deliberation : the *vestal Virgins* were *ten years* in learning, and *ten years* in *practising*, and *ten years* in teaching, and *practising* directions to others : when every *Sciolist* will be obtruding his Notions upon the world, 'tis a great abuse ; for by this means useful men are discouraged ; or if they publish their labours, they are not taken notice of : As two or three grains of

* *Juig. 5, 14.*
† *Scribunt do-
ctiq; indoctiq;
Poemata pif-
sim: Juvenal.*
*Councils have
thought it wor-
thy their care.*
*Vide Canones
Apostolorum,
(ut vocant)
Can. 60.
Synod. Dor-
drac.
Concilii de
corrigendis
Typographia
abusibus, Sessio-
ne. 221.*

* *Εἰς τὴν μὲν
ἑξῆς δεκά-
την ἃ καὶ
ἑπτὰ μνησ-
τερί, τὴν δὲ
μνηστέρα ὡ-
σεύδαται,
ἀπὸ τὴν δὲ
ἑπτὰ ἐτῶν
αὐταὶ διδά-
σκουσι.*
*Plutarchus in
vita Numa.*

good corn are hardly found out under an heap of chaff: But take away this abuse; *writing* is a great help to the Church in *practicals*, that people may still be furnished with *good books* in every age, *old ones* written long ago being neglected, or lying hid in some private studies, or else not coming up to the rate of *present light*, or not answering the *temper* of the present age, nor meeting with the *sins*, nor encouraging the *graces* now in use and exercise. Again, in *controversals* there is great use of *writing*; *cibus contenti-*
controversies not being so easily determined by the judgement of the ear, as the eye †: In the *clamour of disputations* and *vio-*
lent discourse, usually there is such a dust raised, that we cannot so soon discern the truth, as upon a *calm debate*, and *mature con-*
sideration of what is delivered in writing, which I remember was the cause why *Terullian* wrote his Treatise against the *Jews*, lest the *tumult and noise of the dispute* should be some prejudice to the truth. But of this enough.

† *Alterius vi-*
cibus contenti-
oso sunt micis-
dicus in respo-
ram traximus,
obserpentibus
etiam quibus-
dam spectanti-
bis singulorum
nubilo quodam
veritas obum-
brabatur. Ter-
tul. contra
Judxor.
Observat.

I come now to the next Circumstance in the insinuation or *profession of his readiness to do them good*, and that is the *Object*, or *Subject* concerning which he would write to them, [*the common Salvation*], a fit argument for *Saints*; *The Apostles in their private and familiar letters were very spiritual*; yea when they wrote about their *ordinary occasions*, as *Paul to Phil mon.* Still they were ready to impart some *spiritual gift*, whether by *conference* or *writing*; those Letters then should be most welcome to us that mind us of the best things.

But what was this *common salvation*? I suppose by it is meant that *Salvation* wherein *he and they*, and *all the Saints* were concerned; this expression may be conceived to be an *Argument*, either of the *Apostles meekness*; though he were an *Apostle*, and they *private believers*, yet *I and you* have but *one common salvation*; as *Captains* to indur themselves to their *Troop*; will say [*Fellow-souldiers*] as engaged in one *common Warfare*; or else of *his holiness* [*the common salvation*] that is, which I am to look after as well as you: or else of *his love to their salvation*, which he would look after as well as *his own*; the *Saints* carry on a *joint trade to Heaven*; they are all *partners*, and *Salvation* lieth in *common* between them; you are to promote *mine*, and *I yours*: Well then, he having their *faith and salvation* in like respect with his own, he was willing to write to establish them;

them in the truth: I shall form the point in the very words of the Text, *That the Salvation of the people of God is a common Salvation: not to good and bad; for it belongeth only to a peculiar people, but common to all believers: 'tis common to them in divers regards.* 1. They are all chosen by the same grace; there is no special reason why *Paul* should obtain mercy rather than *John*, and *Andrew*, and *Thomas*. Free Grace acteth upon the same terms. All Gods Motives are taken from himself, from his own bosom: For my own sake, saith the Lord, *Isai.* 43. 25. There may be a difference in the creature, *John* and *Andrew* may be otherwise tempered and disposed than *Paul* and *Peter*: but Gods motives to choos both the one and the other are still the same.

2. They have the same Christ; there is no other name under Heaven, *Acts* 4. 12. And *Jesus Christ* the same yesterday, to day, and for ever, *Heb.* 13. 8. In all ages the Church hath been saved by Christ, none of the holy ones of God had a more worthy Redeemer than we have. Christ gave the same ransom to purchase Heaven for me, and thee; and others: as under the Law the rich and the poor were to give the same ransom, *Exod.* 30. 15. *The rich shall not give more, and the poor shall not give less than half a shekel.* The price of Christs blood for all our souls was equal, if they had a more worthy Christ to die for them, you might be discouraged.

3. You are justified by the same righteousness, one as far as another: *The righteousness of Christ is unto all, and upon all that believe, and there is no difference, Rom.* 3. 11. In inherent righteousness, there is a great deal of difference, one hath more grace, and another hath less; in sanctification there are degrees, but as to imputed righteousness, they are all equal; none of the Saints hath finer linen, or are decked with a better vesture than you are; there is a difference in the degree of faith, which receiveth this righteousness, but there is no difference in the righteousness itself: * *a Giant or strong man holdeth a precious Jewel, so doth a Child; the Jewel is the same, though a man holdeth it with a stronger hand, it loseth nothing in the Childs hand.* So here, the Righteousness is the same, though the Faith be not the same.

Yea Fourthly, As we have the same priviledges, so the same way,

* *Gemmam annulo auro inclusam amplectitur, & Gigas; ut imputatam righteousness, they are all equal; none of the Saints amplectitur & hath finer linen, or are decked with a better vesture than you are; there is a difference in the degree of faith, which receiveth this righteousness, but there is no difference in the righteousness itself: * a Giant or strong man holdeth a precious Jewel, so doth a Child; the Jewel is the same, though a man holdeth it with a stronger hand, it loseth nothing in the Childs hand. So here, the Righteousness is the same, though the Faith be not the same.*
Lutherus.

way, all by Faith; and the Faith of the weakest, as to the essential privileges, is as acceptable to God as the Faith of the strongest, 2 Pet. 1. 1. *Simon Peter to them that have obtained like precious faith with us.* 'Tis † like precious for kind, though not † degrees; of the same nature, worth, and property, though every one cannot come up to the height of an Apostle. 5. They are all under the same rule and direction, Gal. 6. 16. *As many as walk by this rule, peace on them, and the whole Israel of God.* The way of error is manifold, but there is but one path that leadeth to Heaven. 6. They are in one mystical Body, ministering supplies to one another, Col. 2. 19. *Not holding the head, from which all the body by joynts and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God.* The head is the Fountain of all vitall influences, but the joynts and bands do minister and convey the nourishments; the whole body is still increasing and growing up to perfection, and they are helping one another, as the members of the same body do continue the communion of the same Spirit, or by the continuity of the parts make way for the animation and quickning by the same soul.

What use shall we make of this? I answer; 1. It hinteth publick care, that we should help salvation forwards, both in our selves and others; rejoyce in others faith as well as in your own Rom. 1. 12. *Comforted by the mutual faith of you and me.* His faith was a comfort to them, and their faith a comfort to him; nay out of an excess of love and charity, Paul useth an expression not imitable, Rom. 9. 3. *I could wish that I were accursed from Christ for my Brethren, my Kinsmen, according to the flesh.*

2. It checketh the impropriating of Grace and Religion, to such an order or sort of Christians, such as was the ambition of former times, as if all Religion were confined within a cloyster, or wrapped up in a black garment; those were called religious houses, and those the Clergy, or Gods portion, all other were Lay, and Secular. Oh how far was this from the modesty of the Apostles! Peter calleth the faith of common Christians, like precious faith; and Jude speaketh of a Common salvation. So the Jews before them they confined Gods choice to their Nation, they could not endure to hear of salvation among the Gen-

rites, and of a righteousness that came to all, and upon all that believe: We have an envious nature, and would fain impropriate common favours. The Church of Rome would fain bring all the world to their lore, and confine Truth and Faith and Salvation within the precincts of their Synagogue; they seize upon and possess themselves of the Keys of Heaven, to open to whom they please. Now God hath broken down all pales and enclosures, they would fain rear up a new partition-wall: Corrupt nature envieth that others should have a fellowship in our privileges, therefore the same spirit still worketh; men do so value their lesser differences, and that distinct way and opinion which they have taken up, as if none could be saved but those of their own party and persuasion: 'tis very natural to us to affix holiness to our own opinions, and to allow none to be good but those that jump with us in all things. There were factions at Corinth, and those that said, *I am of Christ*; were counted a faction too, 1 Cor. 1. 13. as arrogating Christ to themselves; therefore the Apostle writing to them, saith, 1 Cor. 1. 2. *To the Saints at Corinth, and all that call on the Lord Jesus Christ, theirs and ours*. We are apt to be rigid to those that differ from us, and to be favourable to those that think with us. † [Tertulian saith of some in his time, *Illic ipsum est promereri*, 'tis Holiness enough to be one of them. Oh let it not be so among the people of God I. do not nullifie your brethren, Rom. 14. 10. *Why dost thou set at nought thy brethren?* Tis *Eudivis*. Tertulian rendreth it, *Cui nullificas fratrem*; When God hath made a Christian of him, why dost thou make nothing of him? and cry up every private opinion for another Religion, as if none could be Saints and Believers but they that think with you? Take heed of impailing the common Salvation, Inclosures are against the Law.

3. It sheweth that there are not several ways to Heaven, there is but one common Salvation to all the Elect, and one common faith, as Paul saith. Tit. 1. 4, *To Titus my own Son according to the common faith*. There are a sort of Libertines that think a man may be saved in any Religion, so he doth not walk against his own Light: Do not flatter your selves, all the Elect are brought to Heaven the same way, whether Jew or Gentile, bond or free; there is a good old way, Jer. 6. 16. which if we mis we are sure to perish.

4. It

† Tertul. in
praescrip. adver-
sus Hæreticos.

4. It informeth us who are best to deal in matters of Religion, those that are religious, that can call it a *common Salvation*, that is, common to them with others; they have share in it, and therefore they can best defend it; differences are aggravated when carnal men intermeddle in religious controversies, but those are likest to deal with most purity of zeal and love that can say, your salvation is their salvation; so in the next verse, *They turn the Grace of our God into wantonness*, they that have an Interest in Grace cannot endure to see it abused.

5. It forbiddeth scorn of the *meanest Christian*, they have as good hopes through grace, as you have in Jesus Christ: all are one, *Master and Servant, rich and poor*. *Onesimus* a poor runaway servant, yet being converted, *Paul* call:th him *his faithful and beloved brother, Phileas*. 10. In *earthly relations* there is a difference, yet in regard of the *common faith and common salvation* we are all one.

I have now done with the first part of the occasion, *his earnestness in promoting their good*. I now come to the second part, *the urgency of the present necessity* [*It was needfull for me to write to you, and exhort you,*] which is said, to shew that this Epistle was not only occasioned by the fervency of *his own love*, but the *present exigence and necessity as affairs then stood*; the *School of Simon*, the *Gnosticks*, and divers other hereticks of a like loose strain and libertine spirit, sought to withdraw and alienate them from the truth, for that was the *necessity* here expressed, as appeareth by the next verse; Exhortations the *more necessary*, the *more pressing*; need quickens both *Writer and Reader*, and the *less arbitrary* things are, the *more thoroughly* we goe about them.

Observe from hence, *That necessity is a time for duty; necessity is Gods season to work*, and therefore it should be ours; *For a season (if need be) ye are in heaviness*, 1 Pet. 1. 6. Duties are best done, when we see they are *needfull and necessary*; things that are *arbitrary* are done with a *loose heart*; the creatures duties towards God begin at the sense of their own wants, *Jam. 1. 5. If any man lack wisdom, &c.* Well then, take this hint for *Prayer and other services*; if there be a need, omit not to call upon God: as when distempers grow upon the

spirit, the heart's unquiet, the affections unruly, a deadness increaseth upon you, temptations are urgent, and too strong for you, cry out of violence, as the *ravished Virgins*. So when Conscience is incessantly clamorous, *David* could not find ease till he confessed, *Psal. 32. 5.* Silence will cause roaring, and restraint of Prayer, *disquiet*. Again, If there be a need, omit not to call upon men by *exhortation and counsel*; as, when you see things grow worse every day, and can hold no longer: the Kings danger made the Kings dumb (so speak; *Paul* was forced in *Spirits* when he saw the whole City given to idolatry, *Acts 17. 19.* When wee see men by whole droves running into error, and wayes destructive to their souls, is there not a need? is it not a time, to speak? men say we are bitter, but we must be faithful: so they say the Physician is cruel, and the Chirurgion a Tyrant, when their own distempers need so violent a remedy; can we see you perish, and hold our peace?

Observe.

Observe again, That Ministers must mainly press those Doctrines that are most needful; 'tis but a cheap zeal that declaimeth against antiquated errors, and things now out of use and practice: we are to consider what the present age needeth; what use was it of in Christ's time to aggravate the rebellion of *Corah, Dathan, and Abiram*? Or now to handle the Case of *Henry the Eighth's* divorce, what profit hence to our present Auditories?

* 2 Pet. 1. 11.

There are * present truths to be pressed, upon these should we bestow our pains and care; usually when we reflect upon the guilt of the times, people would have us preach general doctrines of faith and repentance. But we may answer, *It is needful to exhort you, &c.* To what end is it to dispute the verity of the Christian Religion against *Heathens*, when there are many Seducers that corrupt the purity of it amongst our selves? In a Countrey Audience, what profit is it to dispute against *Sociinians*, when there are *Drunkards*, and *practical Atheists*, and *Libertines*, that need other kind of Doctrine? He that crieth out upon old errors not now produced upon the publick Stage, doth but fight with Ghosts, and challenge the dead: So again, to charm with sweet strains of grace, when a people need rousing, thundering doctrine, is but to minister Cordials to a full and plesherick body, that rather needeth phlebotomy and evacuations: 'tis a great deal of skill, and God can only teach it us, to be

season-

seasonable to deliver what is needful, and as the people are able to bear.

Again observe, The need of the Primitive Church was an occasion to compleat the Canon and Rule of Faith. We are beholding to the Seducers of that Age, that the Scripture is so full as it is: we should have wanted many Epistles, had not they given the occasion. Thus God can bring Light out of Darkness, and by Errours make way for the more ample discovery of Truth.

Obsev.

I have done with the Occasion, I come now to the Master and Drift of this Epistle: [And exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the Faith that was once delivered to the Saints.] In which there is a necessary duty pressed; and these two Circumstances are notable; the Act, and the Object; the Act is to contend earnestly, 'tis but one word in the Original, *ἀγανισθεσθε*, but 'tis a word of a vehement signification, and therefore fitly rendered to contend earnestly. 2. The Object of this contention, which is, [The Faith once delivered to the Saints.] * Faith may * *Fides est duplex, fides quæ* be taken either for the doctrine of Faith, or the grace of Faith: both are too good to be lost, either the Word which we believe, *creditur*, or fi- or Faith by which we believe; the former is intended, *Faith des qua creditur*. is taken for sound Doctrine, such as is necessary to be owned and believed unto salvation, which he presseth them to contend for, that they might preserve it safe and sound to future Ages. Now this faith is described, 1. By the manner of its conveyance, *δοθέν*; 'tis given to be kept, † 'tis not a thing invented, but † *Aliquid traditum, non se inventum;* given; not found out by us, but delivered by God himself, and delivered as to our custody, that we may keep it for posterity; *aliquid quod* As the Oracles of God in the Old Testament were delivered to acceptiſt, non the Jews to be kept by them, *Rom. 3. 1.* 2. By the time of giving out to the world; the doctrine of salvation was given *Vincentius Lyrinensis.* but once, as never to be altered and changed, once for all, 3. The Persons to whom, [to the Saints,] so he calleth the Church according to the use of the Scriptures; or else by Saints is meant the holy Apostles, given to them to be propagated by them. I shall first speak of the Object, before I come to the duty it self; and because the Description here used will agree both to the Grace of Faith, and the Doctrine of Faith, though the Doctrine of Faith be mainly intended, yet give me leave a little

little to apply it to the *Grace*; if it be a diversion, it shall be a short one.

Observat.

* *Quia ex gratia*
Don. Given
freely.

1. This faith is said to be given. Observe, *That faith is a gift*, so *Phil. 1. 29.* * *To you 'tis given to believe.* *Ephes. 2. 8.* By grace ye are saved through faith, not of your selves, it is the gift of God. We cannot get it of our selves; a meer imagination and thinking of Christs death is easie, but to bring the soul and Christ together, requires the power of God, *Ephes. 1. 19.* We cannot merit it, and therefore it is a pure gift. God bestoweth it on them that can give nothing for it: works before conversion cannot engage God, and works after Conversion cannot satisfy God. Well then, let us admire the mercy of God in the Covenant of grace. Christ is a gift, *John 4. 10.* If thou knewest the gift, &c. His righteousness is a gift, *Rom. 5. 16.* The free-gift is of many offences unto justification; and faith which receiveth this righteousness is a gift: so that all is carried in a way of grace; in the Covenant of grace, nothing is required but what is bestowed. Again, it teacheth us whither to go for faith, seek it of God, 'tis his gift, all the endeavour and labour of the creature will never procure it: But must we not use the means of Prayer, Meditation, and Hearing? &c. I answer, Yes. For 1. God dispenseth it in a way of means, *Mark 4. 24.* With what measure you mete it shall be measured to you again, and unto you that hear more shall be given: According unto the measure of our hearing (if the Lord will work) is the measure of our faith, *Acts 16.* The Lord opened *Lidia's* heart to attend to the things spoken by Paul; God stirreth up to the use of means, and whilest we are * taught we are drawn. 2. Though faith be Gods gift, Mans endeavours are still necessary; for supernatural grace doth not exclude the ordinary and natural means: Marriage is necessary for the propagation of Mankind, though the rational Soul is from God; yea more care is had of women with child then of brute beasts, because the fruit of the womb is the immediate work and blessing of the Lord. So faith is of Gods planting, and therefore we should be the more careful in the use of means.

Observat.

2. This faith is said to be once given; This will also hold concerning grace; for where 'tis once planted it cannot be totally and finally destroyed, rather 'tis continually supplied by the care and faithfulness of God: see *1 Cor. 1. 8.* and *1 Thes. 5. 24.* and *Phil.*

Phil. 16. And those hypocrites that fall off after a long profession seldom recover themselves by repentance, *Heb. 6.6.* *2 Pet. 2.21.* Well then, here is Comfort to the people of God, that find so many lusts, and so many temptations, they think they shall never hold out, faith is but once given: where 'tis really given, there needeth not a second gift. Again, here is Caution, Faith is a precious Jewel; if once lost wiffully after the knowledge of the truth, 'tis not easily regained.

3. Consider the persons to whom it is given; † 'tis not given † ² *Thef. 3.2.* to every one; † for all men have not faith; and † ² *Cor. 4.21* the Gospel is hidden to those that are lost; but 'tis given to the Saints, to those who were chosen, that they might be Saints: which sheweth,
 1. The excellency of Faith, 'tis a privilegiat and peculiar mercy.
 2. That believers are Saints; Faith giveth an interest in ^{1.} *Observ.* Christ, and therefore they must needs be holy; His Blood cleanseth, ^{2.} *Observ.* *1 John 1.7.* His Spirit sanctifieth, *1 Cor. 6.11.* Again, Faith it self hath a cleansing purifying virtue; Hearts purified by faith, *Acts 15. 9.* Faith applieth the Blood of Christ; and the hand of the Laundress is as necessary to cleanse the cloathes, as the soap wherewith they are cleansed: Faith waiteth for the Spirit; it argueth from the love of God: Faith and sin are like the poison and the antidote, alwayes working one upon another, till faith hath gotten the mastery. Well then, Is your faith sanctifying? Strong perswasions of an interest in grace, and a loose life, will not suit: we are not perfectly clean and holy, but there will be strong desires and earnest groans after more holiness; as *Psal. 51. 10.* and *Rom. 7. 24.* Who shall deliver me? &c. that is, On that I were; questions are put for wishes: so *Psal. 119.5.* Oh that my wayes were directed to keep thy Statutes: Yea, there will be not only groans under, but struglings against sin. A child of God may fall into sin, but he cannot rest in it, and lie down with ease; as mud may be cast into a pure Fountain, or stirred up in it, but the Fountain never ceaseth till it work it self clean again. Peter and David stepped aside, but they could find no peace till they were reconciled to God: *I will return to my first husband, then it was better then it is now, Hosea 2.* drift and disposition of their heart; Which way lieth the bent of your spirit's? and what are your constant motions and operations? A man that is travelling another way
 may

may now and then look back: How is your heart inclined? *Psal.* 119. 112. *I have inclined my heart to perform thy Statutes alwayes unto the end*; is there a constant inclination towards God? *1 Chron.* 22. 19. *Now set your hearts to seek the Lord*; Is the heart set? what is your constant course and walk? *Rom.* 8. 1.

But so much for this Digression, occasioned by the suitableness of words, to the grace of faith: Let us now come to the other acceptance, which is more proper in this place, namely, as faith is put for the doctrine of faith: now this was, 1. *Delivered.* 2. *Once delivered.* 3. *to the Saints.*

I.
* *Quod tibi creditum non à te inuentum, quod accepisti non excogitasti.* Vinc. Lyri-
nensis.

1. *Delivered**, not invented; 'tis not the fruit of fancy, or humane devising, but hath its original from God; 'twas delivered by him to holy men chosen for that purpose, and by them delivered by word of mouth to the men of that age wherein they lived, and by writing for the use of after ages: and delivered to be kept; 'tis a sacred *Depositum* which God hath put into the hands of the Church: *Keep that which is committed to thy trust,* *1 Tim.* 6. 20. and to them were committed the Oracles of God, *Rom.* 3. 2. I shall observe, 1. *The Mercy of God* in delivering this Faith or Rule of Salvation. 1. *The Duty of the Church* concerning it.

I. *Observe.*

1. *The Mercy of God* in delivering this faith to chosen men; that by their means the world might come to the knowledge of it. The Doctrine of Salvation first came out from God, and then was conveyed to us by the hands of Holy men; we are not sensible enough of the privilege: *Psal.* 147. 19, 20. *He sheweth his Word unto Jacob, his Statutes and Judgements unto Israel, he hath not dealt so with any Nation, &c.* 'Tis not a common mercy, for many Nations want it; nor no casual thing; in the primitive times not only the Doctrine of the Apostles was directed and ordered by the Holy Ghost, but also their journeys; the Gospel came not to them by chance, but as a special gift from Heaven. But that we may be more sensible of the privilege, I shall shew you, 1. *The Benefit of the Word*: By it Gods heart is opened to us, and our own hearts to our selves; by it we are acquainted with the way of Salvation, and come to understand the courses of the Lords Justice and Mercy, and in what manner he will govern and rule the world, which are altogether unknown

to them that have not such a Revelation delivered to them. We should never have known the *cause* of our misery, our *fall* in *Adam*, nor the *means* of our Recovery, *Redemption* by *Jesus Christ*, if they had not been delivered to us in this *Doctrine* and *Rule of Faith*; we should never have known how to worship God, or enjoy God. If carnal men should have a liberty to let Nature work, and set down a Divinity of their own, what a goodly Religion should we have in the world? a very comely *Chymara* no doubt? For *practicals* it would be large enough I am sure, for *natural conscience* hateth *fetters* and *restraints*; in *Doctrinals* it would be *absurd* enough: Man can never take a right draught and Image of God. Who can empty an Ocean with a Cockle shell? And since the Fall we are grown quite brutish; our conceits are not so monstrous in any thing as in the Worship of God. The Pagan Philosophers, that were most profound in the *researches* and *enquiries* of Reason, they sate abroad, and thought of hatching an excellent Religion; but what was the issue? *Professing themselves to be wise they became fools*, Rom. 1. 22. All that they produced was *fables* and *high strains* of folly, mixed with *popular Rites* and *Customs*. There are many things necessary to Religion, which the *Angels* themselves could not have known if they had not been revealed; therefore their knowledge increaseth by observing *Gods dispensations* to the Church, Ephes. 3. 10. The way of Salvation by Christ is such a *Mystery*, as could not have entered into the heart of any creature, no not of an *Angel*: If an Angel had been to set down which way man should be redeemed, nay if all the *Cherubim* and *Seraphim*, *Thrones*, *Dominions* and *Powers*, had met together in a *Synod* and *Council*, and had taken in all the world to their assistance, it would have posed them all to have found out such a way as God hath appointed. But not to speak of *Mysteries*, There are in the Word some *Moralities* suitable to the *Law of Nature*, which was once written upon mans heart: but alas, now there remains only some *scattered fragments* and *obscure Characters*, so defaced that they cannot be read; and how blind are we in these things without the Word? Witness the *sottish Idolatry* of those Nations that want it, worshipping *stocks* or *stones*, yea, a *piece of red cloth*, or what ever they saw first in the morning; And witness those *brutish Customs* among other Nations whereby *uncleannefs*

and *unnatural* sins have been authorized by a Law. Therefore 'tis a great mercy that something is delivered, and given out as a Rule of Faith and Manners.

2. That this Tradition is written, and put into a stated course in those Books which we call *Scriptures*. If the Revelation of Gods Will had been left to the tradition of men of such a rank or order, what a liberty might they take of coining Oracles, and obtruding their fancies upon the world: 'Tis a great mercy that our faith doth not depend upon uncertain suggestions, but some main publique Records, to which all may appeal and find satisfaction: Heretofore the Lord revealed himself by *Visions, Oracles, and Dreams*, to persons of authentick holiness and sanctity, that they might instruct others; which course was sure enough, while the people of the world were but a few Families, and one persons intrusted with Gods message had authority and credit sufficient with the present age, and lived long to continue the tradition with the more certainty to future ages. But afterwards the Lord was pleased to speak to his Church both by Word and Writing: His Word was necessary for further revealing and clearing up the Doctrine of Salvation; and writing was necessary, because when Precepts were multiplied, it was needful for mens memories that they should be written; the long life of Gods Witnesses was lessened, corruptions began to increase, Satan giving out lying oracles and visions, idolatrous Rites and customs crept into the best Families, the people of God were grown numerous enough to make a Common-wealth and Politick Body; therefore to avoid mans corruptions and Satans deceptions, the Lord thought fit that we should have a written Rule at hand, as a publique Standard for the trial of all Doctrines: * God himself wrote the first Scripture with his own finger upon Tables of stone, and he commanded Moses and the Prophets to do the same, *Exod. 17. 14. and 34. 17* which dispensation of Word and Writing continued till Christs time, who as the great Doctor of the Church perfected the Rule of Faith, and by the Apostles as so many publick Notaries consigned it to the use of the Church in all Ages: When the Canon began to be compleat, the latter Apostles pressed the receiving of it; and John as the last, and as one who outlived all the rest, close'd up his Prophecy thus, *Rev. 22. 18, 19. If any man add, &c. and if any man take away,*

* Josh. 24. 3.
Gen. 39. 2.

* Exod. 24. 12.

away, &c. which doth not only seal up the book of *the Revelations*, but the whole *Canon* and *Rule of Faith*; which indeed was a great mercy to the world; the Lord knew to what a *liberty* we inclined in divine things, and therefore we needed to be tied up to a *Rule*, which here is given us.

3. *The mercy of God appeareth in preserving it, that it may be delivered from one age to another.* No Doctr. is so ancient as the Doctr. of the Scriptures; it describeth the *whole History* of the World from the *very creation*, and the *Original* of all things: Where are there Records so *Ancient*? and yet they have been preserved even to our time. We have some *ancient writings* of the Heathens, though nothing so ancient as *Scripture*; but these are not *contrary to mens lusts*, and have been cherished by them, and yet they have felt the *tooth of time*, and are in a great measure *mangled*; but the Word of God hath been *maligned* and *opposed*, and yet it *continueth*, and holdeth up its head in the world: not only the *main Doctr. of the Scriptures* hath been continued, but *no part* of the Word hath been *falsified, corrupted, destroyed*: the world wanted not *malice*, nor *opportunity*; the *powers of the world* have been bent against it, and *corrupt persons* in the Church have been alwayes given to * *other gospelling*; * Gal. 1. but still the Scriptures have been wonderfully preserved, as the 1 Tim. 6. *three children in the furnace*, not an *hair singed*, nor a *joint* and *title* of Truth perished.

4. *That God doth continually stir up men in the Church, and bestow gifts upon them for the opening and application of this faith and doctrine of Salvation.* Christ that hath given *Prophets* and *Apostles* to the Church to write *Scripture*, hath also given *Pastors* and *Teachers* to open and apply *Scripture*, that so still it might be delivered to the *Saints*, and also to *vindicate* the doctrine of it when *opposed*: Every Age that hath yielded the *Poyson*, hath also yielded the *Antidote*, that the world might not be without a *Witness*; If there hath been an *Arius*, there hath been an *Athanasius*; if a *Pelagius*, there is also an *Austin*; the Church hath never wanted help in this kind. Look as in Warre, as the *Arts of Battery* and *Methods of Destruction* doe increase, so also doth skill in *Fortification*; and in the Church God still bestoweth Gifts, for the further explication of Truth.

5. *That the Light cometh to us, and shineth in this Land.* The Gospel is a great *National Privilege*: To you is this *Word of Salvation* sent, *Acts* 13. 26. Pray mark, 'tis sent; he doth not say, we have brought it to you, but 'tis sent; 'tis a token sent from Heaven in love; there is a mighty *Providence* accompanieth the Gospel; the *journeys* of the Apostles (as I said but now) were ordered by the Spirit as well as their *Doctrine*: *Acts* 8. 26. *The Angel of the Lord said to Philip, Arise, and go towards the South, towards the way that goeth down to Jerusalem*; They went not as their own good affection carried them, but according to the Spirit's direction. So *Acts* 17. 7, 8, 9. *The Spirit suffered them not, &c.* as *Prophecy* came not by the will of man, *2 Pet.* 1. 20. that is, the doctrine it self, so the delivery of it; the doctrine they had from the Holy Ghost, and also their *commission* and *passport*. You would stand wondring, and think it a special benefit, if in a time of droughe the rain should fall on your field, and none else: if, as *Gideons fleece*, your heritage should be wet, when all is dry round about you; or if the Sun should be shut up to others, and shine only in your *Horizon*, as it did in *Goshen*; this is a better blessing, and God hath a special hand in the progress of it; it goeth from place to place, as the Lord will: Why should it come to us? our

* *Monstra Diabolica colabant Ægyptiaca nunc numero Vincensia.*
Gildas.

* *Antecessors* were of all Nations most barbarous and portentous for their *Idolatries*; why to us? No cause can be assigned, but the free grace and gift of God. 6. *That it is given to us in our persons in particular in the power and efficacy of it.* 'Tis offered to the Nation, but bestowed upon us: *John* 14. 12. *Why is it that thou wilt reveal thy self to us, and not unto the world?* Others have onely Truth presented to them obiter, by th. by, for your sakes; but you are called according to his purpose, *Rom.* 8. 28. Though in the general means they have a like favour with you, yet you may obieve the particular aim of God in continuing the Gospel to England for your sakes.

W. It then, Acknowledg God in the truths that are delivered to you out of the Scriptures. What ever means are used God is the Author of the doctrine and the Disposer of the message; receive it as th. Word of God, and then it will profit you, *1 Thes.* 2. 13. If you had an Oracle from Heaven speaking to you on this wise, you would be more serious:

It

Use.

It is as certain, yea 'tis *βασιστος & λβγ*; a more sure Word, 2 Pet. 1. 19. more sure then the Oracle spoken of in the Context: Regard the promises and threatnings of it with more reverence, as if God in Person had delivered them to you: If you receive it as the Word of God, and not of men, what will you venture upon the promises of it? These are bills of exchange given you, that you may draw your estate into another Country, that you may lay up treasures in Heaven: Neglect of the opportunity is a sign of unbelief. If one should proffer you an hundred pound for the laying out of a penny, and you go away and never heed it, 'tis a sign you do not believe the offer. The recompenses of the Word do far exceed all temporal emolument; if you do not heed them, 'tis a sign you do not believe them. So, what will you forbear upon the threatnings of the word? If there were a Law made, that every time we deceive or slander one another we should hold one of our hands in scalding Lead for half an hour, men would be afraid of the offence. God hath told us that the wages of sin is death, that we shall be plunged for evermore in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone; and yet it doth not deter us from sin, and giving offence to God. If a man were told that he were in danger of a cruel death every moment if he did not presently get a pardon, he would not sleep till it were done: Natural men are in danger of Hell every moment by the sentence of the Word, and yet how backward are they to make their peace with God?

Secondly, The word [delivered] implieth a leaving things in anothers hand by way of trust, and so doth not only note the mercy of God, but the duty of the Church, to whom the Oracles of God are committed to be kept: Whence observe, That God Observ. 2. hath delivered the Doctrine and Rule of Faith to the Church as a publick Trustee, that it may be kept and employed to the uses of the Truth. Let us a little see what is the Churches duty towards the Truth: I answer, 1. To publish it to the present age. 2. To keep it and preserve it for ages to come: So that to the present age we are * Witnesses to the future Trustees.

* Isa. 43. 10.

1. To publish, own and defend the Truth, by Profession and Martyrdom; and therefore the Church is called the pillar and ground of Truth, 1 Tim. 3. 15. namely in respect of men, and as it holdeth it forth to the world; and therefore we ought to hear-

ken.

ken to the Churches Testimony till we have better evidence : We do not ultimately resolve our faith into the Churches Authority, for the Churches Authority is not absolute, but ministerial ; as a royal Edict doth not receive credit by the Officer and Crier, he only declareth it and publisheth it ; yet the Churches Testimony is not to be neglected, for Faith cometh by hearing, Rom. 10. 14. and this publication of the Church is a good preparative inducement, John 4. 42. If we would know the truth of a thing, till we have experience we go to those that have experience, and ordinarily the judgment of others whom we respect and reverence causeth us to have a good opinion of a thing till we make trial our selves : in which respect Austin saith, *I had never believed the Scriptures, unless I had been moved therunto by the Authority of the Church ; as we should never have known the Kings pleasure, unless the Messenger had brought us his Letters.* The Church hath not power to make and unmake Scripture at pleasure, but only to communicate and hold forth the Truth ; and till we have further assurance is so far to be heard : We receive the Faith of *per Ecclesiam* by the ministry of the Church, though not *propter Ecclesiam*, for the Authority of the Church.

2. The next Office of the Church is to preserve the Truth, and transmit it pure to the next age : As the Law was kept in the Ark, so was truth delivered to the Church to be kept. 1 Tim. 3. 11. *The glorious Gospel committed to my trust : There is a trust lieth upon us ; upon the Apostles first, to publish the whole Counsel of God, and then upon Pastors and Teachers in all ages to keep it afoot, and upon all Believers and Members of the Church to see that after-ages be not defrauded of this privilege :* We are to take care that nothing be added, there is enough to make the man of God perfect ; nothing diminished ; none of the Jewels which Christ hath left with his Sponse must be embazled ; that it be not corrupted and sophisticated ; for we are not onely to transmit to the next age the Scriptures, those faithful Records of Truth, but also the publick Explications of the Church in Summaries and Confessions must be sound and orthodox, lest we entail a prejudice upon those that are yet unborn : Every one in his place is to see that these things be accomplished. So much for the Tradition it self.

Non crederem
Scriptura nisi
me Ecclesia mo-
veret Authori-
tas. Aug.

* 1 Deut. 4. 2.
& 12. 32.

Non

Now for the Manner [*Once delivered*] that is, *once for all*, as never to be altered and changed; and when the *Canon or Rule of Faith* was closed up, there was nothing to be added further, as *a part of the authentick and infallible Rule*, though the *dayly necessities* of the Church do call for a *further Explication*. But you will say, You told us but now how the Word was *many times delivered*, how then *once*? I answer, The Apostle speaketh not of the *successive manifestations* of Gods Will to Prophet after Prophet till the *Old Testament* was perfected, but of that *common doctrine* which the Apostles and Evangelists by *one consent* had published to the world, and which was now to settle into a *Rule*, and so to remain without change till the coming of the Lord.

Observe, That the doctrine of Salvation was but once delivered, 3. *Observed to remain for ever without variation.* Paul chideth them for being withdrawn to another Gospel, Gal. 1. 6. and Peter telleth them to prevent the reception of feigned Oracles that they had a *sure Word of Prophecy*, 2. Pet. 1. 19. a safe rule to trust to; and Paul biddeth Timothy, * Continue in the things which he had ^{2 Tim. 3. 14,} learned. and our Lord saith, Matt. 24. ^{15.} This Word of the Kingdom shall be preached to all Nations. Now the doctrine of Salvation is but *once delivered*, 1. Because all is done so fully and perfectly, that nothing can be added; there is enough to *make us wise to Salvation*, and what should Christians desire more? ^{2 Tim. 3. 1} There is enough to *make the man of God perfect*; that is, to furnish him with all kind of knowledge for the discharge of his office; there needeth no more; there is enough to make us wise to *preach*, and you wise to *practice*; and *tis certain enough, that you need not spend your time in *doubting and disputing*; and *tis full enough, you need nothing more to *satisfie the desires of Nature*, or to *repair the defects of Nature*: here is sufficient instruction to decide all Controversies, and assuage all doubts, and to give us a *sure conduct* to everlasting glory. 2. Because this Rule can never be destroyed: The word hath often been in danger of being lost, but the miracle of its preservation is so much the greater: In *Josiah's* time there was but *one Copy* of the Law; in *Dioctesians* time there was an *Edict* to burn their Bibles, and Copies were then *scarce and chargeable*; yet still they were kept, and so shall be to the end of the world, for

for the Sacraments must continue till *Christ come*, *Mat. 28 20 & 1 Cor. 11. 26.* and the Word must be preached till we all grow into a perfect body in *Jesus Christ*, *Eph. 4. 12, 13.* not only *de jure*, but *de facto*, not only it *must be so*, but it *shall be so*. Well then, expect not new Revelations, or discoveries of new Truths beside the Word, which is the *immutable Rule* of Salvation. Again, it checketh them that expect new Apostles, endued with the Spirit of Infallibility, to resolve all doubts and questions: We must give heed to the Scriptures, till the *day-star* arise in your hearts, that is, till we have full communion with Christ; for our reward in Heaven is expressed by the *morning star*, *Revel. 2. 28.* To him that overcometh I will give the morning star. Again, it confuteth the Familists, that dream of some *dayes of the Spirit*, wherein we shall have a greater light than is in the Scriptures; they fancy the time of the Law to be the dayes of the Father, the time of the Gospel to be the dayes of the Son, and the latter end of the world to be *saeculum Spiritus Sancti* (as the *Weigelians* phrase it) the age of the Holy Ghost, but foolishly, for these are ** the last times*, and the Holy Ghost was never more gloriously poured out then at *Christ's Ascension*, and greater things cannot be revealed to us then *God in Christ reconciling the world*. Lastly, 'tis for the comfort of the Saints, that their Salvation is put into a *stated course*, and God hath shewed you what you must do if you would inherit eternal life.

* Acts 1. 17.
Heb. 1. 1.

3. The next circumstance is the persons to whom it was delivered, [to the Saints,] it may be understood of the Apostles, to whom it was delivered to be propagated; or of the Church, to whom it was delivered to be kept, and who in the constant use

of Scripture are called Saints. Observe, That Saints are most interested in the acknowledgment, propagation and defence of Truth. The Christian faith was delivered to Saints and by Saints, and none receive it so willingly, and defend it so zealously, and keep it so charity and faithfully as they do. 1. The men that the Spirit of God made use of as Penmen were holy men special'y purified and sanctified for this work: 2 Pet. 1. 21. *Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost: And Ephes. 3. 5. Revealed unto his holy Apostles and Prophets by the Spirit:* These men were the fittest instruments to beget an external repute to the Word; Surely they would not doe any thing for their own ends,

ends, and obtrude their own inventions upon the world as Oracles from God. A carnal mans testimony is liable to suspicion; Who would count that wholsom that cometh from a leापrons hand? Yea those that were not of eminent sanctity were not fit for such an employment; a novel doctrine (such as the Gospel seemed to be in the world) needed all the advantages that might be, to gain a title and interest in their belief; therefore did the Lord make use of such holy and self-denying persons, who expected to gain nothing but ignominy, poverty, afflictions, bonds, death; these things did abide for them in every City. 2. Holy persons are only fit to preach the Faith; sancta sanctis, holy men for holy things; 'tis an holy faith, and therefore fit to be managed by holy persons, that their hearts may carry a proportion with their work: *Isai. 52.11. Be ye clean that bear the Vessels of the Lord:* The Officers that carried the Vessels and Utensils of the Temple out of Babylon were to take care of their cleanness. God purified *Isaiah* when he sent him to reprove, *Isai. 6.7.* and the Priests under the Law that ministered before the Lord, were to wash in the great Laver; Regeneration is the best preparation for the Ministry. Others disparage their Testimony, and bring a reproach upon the Gospel; People think we must say somewhat for our living, and so give us the hearing, but thats all: Oh think of it, the credit of Christ lieth at Stake; and since Miracles are ceased, all the external confirmation that we can add to the Word is by holyness of conversation. The Levites first cleansed themselves, and then cleansed the people, *Nehem. 12.30.* The life of a Minister is much either to edification or destruction; they take the lesson rather from your lives than your * *Erubescit* mouths, and by your lechery or vanity sin cometh to be authorized: in short, either your doctrine will make your life blush, or *quaerit* your life will make your doctrine blush and be ashamed. 3. None *quam propria* are fit publickly to defend the Truth, but the holy; they speak *reprehensit* with more power, as from the heart and inward experience, and *conscientia.* Hieron. in *Epistola.* are more zealous as being more nearly concerned; * they that partake of Gods Nature, will soonest espouse Gods Cause and *Marcella.* Quarrel: and their zeal is most pure; Carnal men pervert religious differences, they change the nature of them, turning them into a strife of words, or a contention for interests; matters are not managed so purely as when there is conscience on both sides: *1 Cor. 13.5.*

The *Saints* contend best for the *Saints faith*. Zeal in carnal men is like *fire in straw*, quickly up and quickly down; but in the godly 'tis like *fire in wood*, longer kept: *Wisdom is justified of her children*, Matt. 11. 19. they are fittest to interpose. Again, *sa* fe zeal is most passionate without *piety* and *meekness*, but the flame is most pure and bright in an holy heart, which is subdued to the power of Truth. 4. *None receive the Truth so willingly as the Saints do*: Holy persons can best understand what was written by holy men, they pierce into it more deeply; as Iron that is *red hot* runneth further into the board, then a *sharp tool* that is *cold*: * God unbosometh himself to his familiars; Holy hearts are not clouded with the mists of lusts and interests: † *Where there is purity, there is brightness*; the mind being separated from *gross things* is fitted for the reception of *spiritual* things. † Πῦρ καθαρὸν *my* mysteries: Paul saw most of God when he was blind to the world, the Heart being taken off from the World, is erected to things *supernatural* and of an higher cognizance. 5. *None retain the Truth more firmly than the Saints do*. *Manna* was kept in a *golden Vessel*, and so is Truth in a pure *Soul*: Titus 3. 9. *Holding the mystery of faith in a pure conscience*. An unclean vessel soweth the liquor that is put into it; so doth a carnal heart pervert the faith, and taint the judgement. Let a man once be given up to some *great lust*, and you shall soon find him to be given up to some *roaring error* also; and when once they come to make *shipwrack* of a good conscience, they do not long hold the faith that was once given to the Saints, for *grace* and *truth* alwayes thrive together.

Dolt.

I come now to the main Observation that is to be drawn from these words; That 'tis the Duty of Christians in times of Error and seducement to contend earnestly for the Faith once given to the Saints. 'Tis their duty at all times, but then especially: 1. That we may not discredit our selves and the truth: 2. That we may not hazard our selves and the truth.

1. Let me first speak to the Discredit; and there I shall shew:
1. That Truth is honoured by a bold and resolute Defence of it: We are not ashamed of it though it be questioned and scorned in the world: * *Wisdom is justified of her children*: Neither *Johns doctrine* nor *Christs doctrine* would relish with the world, yet some had a reverend opinion of it for all that, *Psal. 119. 26. 27. They make void thy Law, therefore I love it above pure gold,*

* Psa. 25. 14.

John 7. 17.

† Πῦρ καθαρὸν

† λαμπρὸν

Not. Orat. (ut

memini) 40.

Holiness doth

not blunt the

wit, but sharp-

ness is not a

worse spiri-

tual fight then

they that lack

grace.

2 Pet. 1. 9.

* Mat. 11. 19.

Intimes of defection our love to God, and the wayes of God, should be the greater; as *Fountain water* is hottest in coldest weather. 'Twas an honour to the Christian Religion that the † Primitive Professours were glad of an occasion to dye for it; † *Quid ergo* and the more it was despised and persecuted, the more did they *malum in Christiana Religionis cuius rem gaudet accusatio verum est et pena salutaris.* own it: falsehoods cannot endure the blunt of Opposition. *Tercul.* 2. That we may not dishonour our selves, and discredit our own profession: He is but an ill servant of Christ, that will not serve him when the Lord hath need of him; when God distinguisheth ** Exod. 31.* sides, and crieth out, * *Who is of my side, who?* Times of Error and Seducements are searching trying times: Light chaff is carried about with every wind; but the solid grain lieth still upon the ground: The approved are made manifest, 1 Cor. 11. 19. There is a time not only to shew love, but valour. Jer. 9. 3 *They are not valiant for the truth upon the Earth.* To be valiant for Truth is to defend it in time of opposition, and to sparkle so much the more in an holy zeal because they pervert the right wayes of the Lord: A Christian must have an heart as well as a liver, not only love the Truth, but contend for it, and the more earnestly, the more 'tis opposed: the Apostle saith, that a Bishop must hold fast the Word of Truth, Titus 1. 9. * The word signifieth an holding it fast against a contrary force; as when a man seeketh to wrest a staff out of anothers hand, he holdeth it the faster. ** Apte xi. 14.*

2. The next Reason is, That we may not endanger and hazard our selves and the Truth. 1. That we may not endanger our selves: 'Tis good to be able to defend Religion when 'tis questioned; ignorant, secure and careless spirits will certainly miscarry: Present Truths and present Errors have an aspect upon our interests; we must determine one way or another: Now how easily are they carried away with interests that have no Principles, no *ιδιον σιγήριον*, 2 Pet. 3. 17. no proper ballast in their own spirits? Therefore let us strive to know the Truth, to own the Truth in a time of trial; 'tis needful: All Errors and Heresies are but mens natural thoughts gotten into some valuable opinion, because backed with the defences of wit and parts. What are all the learned Disputes against the Truths, but the props of those vulgar misprisions, and gross conceits that are in the heart of every natural and ignorant man? We have all

* Pelagiani
omnes nasci-
muri & cum
supercilio
Pharisaico.
Spanheim.

an Heretick in our bosoms, and are by nature prepared to drink in all kind of errors and lies; and therefore we are said, *Psal. 58. 3.* to speak lies from the womb, because these things are in our natures; * we are born Pelagians, and Libertines, and Papists. As in the new nature there is a cognation and proportion between us and Truth, so in the old nature there is an inclination to all manner of Errors. Luther saith, Every man is born with a Pope in his belly: And Mr. Greenham hath a saying, That if all Errors and the memorials of them were annihilated by the absolute Power of God, so that there should not the least remembrance of them remain, yet there is enough in the heart of one man to revive them again the next day. Certainly, what ever is suggested from without doth very well suit with the carnal thoughts that are in our own bosoms: Look upon any error or blasphemy that is broached in the world, and you will find it true: Is Atheism vented? The fool hath said in his heart, there is no God, *Psal. 14. 1.* Gentilism or the doctrine of many Gods? So do we set up many Gods; what ever we fear or love, that we worship; Whose god is their belly, *Phil. 3. 19.* Every man naturally is a Pagan and Idolater: Pelagian Tenets, wherein original sin is denied, are natural: Common people think they had ever a good heart towards God; All these have I kept from my youth, *Matth. 19. 20.* Chance and Fortune in a contradiction to Gods Decrees are a mans natural opinions. So the doctrine of works and merit is in every mans heart: What question more rise when we begin to be serious, then What shall I do? A ceremonious ritual Religion is very pleasing to carnal sense; Conjectural persuasions is but a more handsom word for the thoughts of ignorant persons; they say they cannot be assured, but they hope well: Doctrines of Liberty are very suitable also to corrupt nature; Cast away the cords, *Psal. 2.* and Who is Lord over us? *Psal. 12. 4.* Nay all sins are rooted in some error of judgement, and therefore they are called errors, *Psal. 19. 12.* Well then, for our own Caution we had need stand for the Truth, because Error is so suitable to our thoughts; now when it spreadeth further, 'tis suitable also to our interests, and then we are in great danger of being overfer. 2. That we may not hazard the Truth: When Errors go away without controul, 'tis a mighty prejudice both to the present and the next age. The dwellers upon earth rejoiced when

when Gods witnesses were under hatches, and there was none to contest with them, Rev. 11. 10, *Fools* must be answered, or else they will grow *wise in their own conceits*, Prov. 26. 4-5. Error is of a spreading growing nature, therefore 'tis not good to retreat and retire into our own cells from the heat and burden of the day; let us stand in the gap and make resistance as God giveth ability. Two motives will enforce this Reason. 1. The *Preciousness* of Truth: *Buy the Truth, and sell it not*, 'tis a commodity that should be bought at any rate, but sold by no means, for the world cannot bid an answerable price for it: Christ thought it *worthy his blood* to purchase the Gospel; by offering up himself he not only procured the *comfort of the Gospel*, but the *very publication of the Gospel*; therefore we should reckon it among our *treasures and choicest privileges*, and not easily let it go, lest we seem to have cheap thoughts of Christs blood. 2. *The trust that is reposed in us for the next age*, that's an obligation to faithfulness: We are not only to look to our selves, but to posterity, to that Doctrine which is transmitted to them; *One generation teacheth another*, and as we leave them *Laws and other National Privileges*, so it would be sad if we should not be as careful to leave them *the Gospel*. *Our fathers told us what thou didst in their days*, Psal 44. 1 Every age is to consider of the next, lest we intail a prejudice upon them against the Truth, What cometh from forefathers is usually received with reverence; *A vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers*, 1 Pet. 1. 18. If you be not careful you may sin after you are dead, our errors and *evil practices* being continued and kept a foot by posterity. All the world had been lost in *Error and Prophaneness*, if God had not stirred up in every age some *faithful witnesses* to keep up the memory of Truth. There is in man a natural desire to do his posterity good; *Love is descensive*: Oh consider, how shall the children that are yet unborn come to the knowledge of the purity of religion, without some *publick monument*, or care on your part to leave religion unlesified. *Antichrist* had never prevail'd so much, if men had thought of after ages; *they slept* and unwarily yielded to inchoachment, after inchoachments till Religion began to degenerate into a *fond superstition or bundle of pompous and idle Ceremonies*; and now we see how hard it is to wean men from there.

these things, because they have flown down to them in the *stream of succession*, and challenge the *authority* and *prescription* of *ancient Customes*. Look as sometimes the *Ancestors guilt* is measured into the bottom of *posterity*, because they continued in their practices; *Maith. 23. 35. That upon you may come all the righteous blood, &c.* So many times the miscarriages of *posterity* may justly be imputed to us, because they shipwrecked themselves upon our example: *The fathers are sower Grapes, and the childrens teeth are set on edge.* Well then, let us perform the part of faithful Trustees, and keep the Doctrine of Salvation (as much as in us lieth) pure and unmixed.

It presseth us to this earnestness of contention and zeal for the Truths of God: We live in a frozen age, and *curfed indifferency* hath done a great deal of mischief. Christians! Is *Error* grown less dangerous? or the *Truth of Religion* more doubtful? Is there nothing certain and worth contention? or are we afraid to meddle with such as shrowde themselves under the glorious name of *Saints*? We will not oppose *Saints*, and so let the *Truth* go that was given to the *Saints*, to be kept by them: Oh my Brethren, *Paul withstood Peter to the face*, when *Truth* was like to suffer, *Gal. 2. 11.* So should we withstand them to the face rather, then make such *sad work* for the next age, and leave our poor babes to the danger of error and seduction. What's become of our zeal? There is none valiant for the *Truth* upon the Earth: *Prejudices* and *Interests* blind men so that they cannot see what they see, and are afraid to be zealous, lest they should be accounted bitter. We have been jingling about discipline, and now doctrine it self is like to escape us. In the Name of God let us look about us; Are there not *crafty thieves* abroad that would steal away our best treasure? and in the midst of the scuffle cheat us and our posterity of the Gospel it self? We have been railing at one another for lesser differences, and now we begin to be ashamed of it: Satan hopeth that *Error* and *Blasphemy* it self shall go scot-free. Ah my Brethren, 'tis time to awake out of sleep; whilest we have slept the Enemy hath come and sown tares: What a tattered Religion shall we transmit to ages to come, if there be not a timely remedy? To help you I shall shew,

1. What we must contend for.

2. Who must contend, and in what manner.

1. *What we must contend for*; for every Truth of God according to its *moment* and *weight*: The dust of Gold is precious; and 'tis dangerous to be careless in the *lesser* *Trinths*. *Whosoever shall break the least of the Commandments, and teach men so to do, &c. Mat. 5. 19.* There is nothing superfluous in the Canon; the Spirit of God is wise, and would not burthen us with things unnecessary: Things *comparatively* little may be great in their *own sphere*, especially in their *season*, when they are the Truths of the *present age*, and now brought forth by God upon the Stage of the World that we may study his mind in them. * *Better Heaven and Earth should be blended together in confusion* (saith Luther), *then one dust of Gods Truth should pervert unanimity.* If the Lord call us out to the defence of them, what ever cometh of it we must be faithful: A man may make shipwreck of a good Conscience in *small matters*; say not, *It is a little one, and my soul shall live*: Harken to Satan, and this will be a *little one*, and that shall be a *little one*, till we have *listled away* all the principles of faith. I tell you, the world hath counted *those small things* for which the children of God have ventured their all: 'tis your duty to take the *little Foxes*, Cant. 2. 15. The first appearances of Error are many times modest: There is a charm of Truths; the Devil taketh out a link here, and a link there, that all may fall to pieces: See 2 *Thes. 2. 2.* *Let no man deceive you with such doctrine as that the day of Christ is at hand*: Why? they might say there is no great danger in that? Peter saith, *the end of all things draweth nigh*, 1 *Pet. 4. 7*. The Seducers said, *Eximus*, it is at hand; and Peter saith, *Apparet*, it draweth nigh; here is no great difference: Aye but be not shaken in mind- (saith Paul) neither by *visu* quo cum *letter*, nor by word, nor by spirit, as if the day of the Lord were at hand: that is, take heed of such suggestions under what pretence soever they are brought to you, either of *Revelations* or *Collections from my Doctrine*, 'tis all a falsehood: * *Why is Paul so earnest?* because Satan had an aim to make them look for the sudden coming of Christ, which hapning not according to make them fall a questioning all the truths of God. So *Gen. 3. 2* *Ye shall not eat nor touch lest ye dye*; that was Satans repetition; whereas

* *Potius rursus
Cælum quam
periret unanimitas
veritatis.* Lu-
ther,

* *Ne forte cum
transisset tem-
peramentum
credere debent esse
venturum &
verisse non
certarent, siam
cetera se faceret
sibi promissi
arbitrantes &
de ipsa mercede
fieri desperantes.*
Aug Ep. 60.

whereas God had said, *Gen. 2. 17. Thou shalt surely dye: no great difference*, but Satan got a great deal of advantage by it, therefore be not ignorant of *Satans devices*: The Council of Nice would not gratifie † *Arrins* in a *letter*; and * *Nestorius* in a *letter*: The lesser Truths are not to be slighted in their time and place; they deserve an *earnest contention*: The Martyrs were not *foolish* nor *prodigal* of their lives; they knew what they did, when they durst not give place for a moment.

† *Quoniam*
and *quoniam*
* *Quoniam*
and *disobedi-*

All this is not spoken to justify *undue rigors*, such as are without any temper of *Christian moderation*; or those frivolous Controversies about trifles, such as have no foundation in the Word, as about the *Observation of Easter*, between the *Eastern & Western Churches*, w^{ch} difference grew so high that they *excommunicated* each other; or about *celebrating the Lords Supper with leavened or unleavened bread*; or the fierce bickrings between *Chrysostom* and *Epiphanius* about *Origens Books*, set on by *Theophilus*, in pursuit of which many were slain, the Senate house pulled down, and the great Church at *Constantinople* set on fire. Nor to justify meer *verbal strifes* about words and names forbidden by the Apostle, *2 Tim. 2. 14. 1 Tim. 6. 4.* Vain-glorious men if they can get but a *different method or expression*, cry up *new light*, and so there is a great deal of noise stirred up about a *mistake*. Nor to justify the *breaking off Church-fellowship and communion*, and making rents in the Body of Christ, because of difference of opinion in *smaller matters*, when we agree in the *more weighty things*: We are to walk together as far as we are agreed, *Phl. 3. 16.* and externals wherein we differ, lying far from the heart of Religion are nothing to faith and the new creature, wherein we agree, *Gal. 5. 6. and 16. 15.* The most weight should be pitched upon the *fundamentals and essentials of Religion*; and when there is an agreement, private differences in *small matters* should not make us break off from one another: *False zeal* is unevenly carried out to these lower things both in opinion and practise; and usually young Professours are eager upon disputes, impatient of contradiction, and lay out all their strength this way, to excuse their care in the more weighty matters of Christianity; whereas the Kingdom of God doth not stand in meat and drink, but in peace, and righteousness.

ousness and joy in the Holy Ghost, Rom. 14. 17. The such of disputing and zeal for an opinion, rather than Religion in the main, are bad characters. Again, when men, though in the right, think there is no Religion or holiness but within the compass of such an opinion, this is censorious rigour, or to * be righteous overmuch; or when a lesser dissent is loaded with all the odious consequences that you can fancy in your thoughts, though disclaimed by the party dissenting; when Eloi is turned into Elias, and things are perverted by a mis-interpretation, as Christs words are, John 2. 19. compared with Mas. 26. 61. Briefly, when men upon every small occasion draw all things to extremity, and break out into † contumely, revilings, persecution, biting and devouring one another; 'tis not zeal, but fierceness and brutish immoderation; Therefore all this excepted, it standeth us upon to be zealous, even to sufferings for the lesser Truths, that we may prevent the further inroachments of Satan, and Antichrist his eldest son upon the liberties and priviledges of the Saints.

But now besides the lesser things, there are *Fundamentals* and *Essentials* in Religion, which challenge the choicest of our care and zeal, that they may be kept entire and without violation; the ignorance of them is damnable, and the denial heretical: to determine what they are is an undertaking of great concernment to the Christian World, but of too high a nature for the present Exercise. I shall only mention a few Points (which seem to be in *apostolic* matters concerning the Foundation; as the Creation of the world by God in six dayes out of nothing, Gods Providence, mans misery by sin, deliverance by Christ, the necessity of the new Creature, the Resurrection of the dead, and the everlasting Recompences: These are Points of the greatest moment, though I cannot but say that others also are Fundamental; but these come to mind as being of the most practical concernment.

2. *Whomust strive, and in what manner?* I answer; All in their place, and in that way that is proper to them. 1. *Private Christians* must have a share in this holy contention; their duty is partly to search out the Truth, that they may not fight blindfold, or by an unhappy mistake lay sh out their zeal upon fancies which they affect, or ordinances and doctrines of men: People

Ecc. 7. 17.

† As Rivers laid of Montague, Non potest ille quemquam a quo dissentit vir in levissimis sine convitiis nominare.

Rivers Apol. pro sanctissima Virgine Maria.

* There are divers other Fundamentals of the highest nature, as the Mystery of the Trinity into which we are baptized, the Union of the two Natures in the Person of Christ, that Scriptures are the Word of God, &c.

are never so furious, as when they have *least ground* and reason for what they assert; yea and error never prevaileth so much as when Christians are *all flame and affection*, without judgement, and do not understand the *Reasons* of that Religion which they do profess: See 1 *Pet.* 3. 15. *A reason of the hope that is in you*; and 2 *Pet.* 3. 17. *id est superyuor, their own steadfastnesses*; that is, such a steadfastness as doth arise from *solid grounds in their own hearts*, and not merely from the consent of others; 2. *To own the profession of the Truth, what ever it cost them*; I say 'tis their duty to own the profession of the Truth; for the publick owning of the people 'tis a great let and restraint to *Tyranny*, and such innovations as otherwise a carnal Magistrate would introduce into the Church by force and power: See *Acts* 4. 21. *They let them go because of the people*: so *Matthew* 14. 5. and 21. 46. And again, I say they must own it what ever it cost them, for zealous defences are a great honour to the truth: The disputations of the Doctors do not commend it to the world so much as the death of the *Martyrs*; and therefore though you cannot dispute for the truth, yet you should dye for the truth: *Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, &c. Heb.* 12. 4. We cannot be at too much cost to preserve so precious a treasure to Posterity; And here even * *women* may put in a share, they have lives to sacrifice upon the interest of the Truth, and usually they do not fall in vain. 3. To honour the Truth by their conversations: there are *heretical manners*, as well as *heretical doctrines*; and there are many that are otherwise of an *orthodox belief*, yet make other sectaries and disciples of their vices: some live *Atheism*; they are *Antinomians in practice*: An *Apostate* is a *practical Arminian*: Therefore Christians are called to hold forth the Word of life in their Conversations, *Phil.* 2. 16. and to make the *Doctrine of God the Saviour comely*, *Tit.* 2. 10. by glorifying God in that course of life to which they are disposed: To preach and write for the Truth doth not honour it so much as to walk in the Truth, *John* Ep. 3. 4. † and the life is a better witness of the reality of Religion, then the tongue. 4. To comprise all in a few words; what ever maketh for the Truth, either with God or men all that must the people do; *We can do nothing against the Truth, but for the Truth*, saith *Paul*, 2 *Cor.* 13. 8. To God you must pray, that he would send forth not only *Labourers*, but

* Ipsa feminae
sunt nobiscum
in eadem confessionis gloria
constituta.
Cyp. Marc.
Cum triumphantibus viris
et feminae con-
iungunt, quae cum
saeculo dimicaverit
sexum quoque
vicerunt. Cyp.
Serm. de Lapsis.
† Efficacius est
vita quam lingua
testimoni-
um. B. Bernard.

Cham-

Champions, Mar. 9. 38. not only such as can handle the *trowel*, but the *sword*, in the Battels of the Church : * To men, you are * *Gladiatores* to quicken those that have gifts to look to their duty in this *perfectissimos* kind ; Say to *Archippus, Take heed to thy Ministry which thou non tantum* hast received in the Lord, *Col. 4. 17.* Many may be stirred up *magistri & praepositi* by your exhortations, that otherwise would lie useless in *sed etiam Idiotae* idleness and privacy ; in the battel the *Trumpeter* hath his use as *& supervacuè* well as the *Souldier* : Neither are they to be admonished onely, *quisq; adhortantur de longinquo ut scpe de ipso populo dictata* but assisted, and by that means you have an interest in the *suggesta profuerint. Tertul.* glory of the work : *John Ep. 3. 8.* We ought to receive such, that *ad Marc.* we may be fellow-helpers to the Truth ; *συνεργοι*, co-workers ; your helping hand is to the action, and God will not be unmindfull of it ; yea, if you bear any part of the toil, by performing any labour of love to them, it shall turn to a good account in the day of the Lord : *Hazekiah's* servants did but copy out the *Proverbs*, and 'tis mentioned to their prayse, *Prov. 25. 1.* All this may be done by persons of a private gift and station.

2. There is something that the Magistrate may do ; * *He is* * *Rom. 13. 4.* the Minister of God for good ; not only for good Civil, but Spiritual ; and therefore doth the Apottle bid us pray for them, that they may be keepers of both the Tables, *1 Tim. 2. 2.* that we may lead a quiet life under them in all godliness and honesty. * *Tὸ θεὸς θέλει* * *ov ἐπιμελίζεσθαι* * *&c. Arist. Polit. l. 7. c. 8.* Heathens have asserted, That it belongeth to the Magistrates duty chiefly to look after matters of Religion : Much more is it evident by the light of Christianity : The Kings of the Old Testament are commended for their zeal in this kind ; and in the times of the Gospel it is prophesied that *Kings shall be the Churches nursing Fathers, and Queens her nursing Mothers, Isai. 49. 23.* which they cannot be, if they suffer possion to be given to Gods little ones without any let and restraint : 'Tis a clear truth, that if a man give up himself to Christ, he is to give up himself to him in every relation ; his wit, wealth, parts, authority, all to be laid out for the use and service of Christ : he that doth not give up all, giveth nothing ; we are to be Christs in every capacity : Therefore a Magistrate as a Magistrate must not onely countenance Religion, but also discountenance Error, and hinder the spreading of it within his charge. 'Tis by Christ * that Kings reign, from him they received their power, and * *Piev. 8. 15.*

to him must they give an account of the exercise of it in the great day of Recompences ; therefore they are bidden to be *wise*, and to *kiss the Sun*, *Psal. 2. 10, 11, 12.* which certainly noteth more then a *negative* *all or not opposing* ; there must be something *positive*, a *zealous defense of the Truth* in their way, or else God will reckon with them : Those *Gallio's* that are indifferent to *Christ* and *Antichrist* cannot expect a long and happy reign, I cannot see how they can be true to *Civil Interest*, unless they be careful for the *suppression of Error* ; for when false doctrines are freely vented, 'tis to be supposed they will find a *general reception*, for the most are the worst ; and then when the generality of a Nation are corrupted, National Judgements will not long be kept off, the whole body is sure to smart for it ; for (as the Jewish Proverb is) *Two dry sticks will set a green one on fire* : Besides, that *Error* is *masterly* and *bloody*, and loveth to give Law ; therefore ere it be too late they should look to the *Civil Peace* ; for if men be quiet, God will not, when his Honour and Truth, and Worship is neglected. But of this more hereafter.

3. Ministers are to contend for the Truth ; for by their office and station in the Church they are *Captains of the people* in this War against Satan and his adherents ; therefore 'tis required of them that they should be able to handle the *sword* and the *sword* ; not only to *exhort by sound Doctrine*, but to *convince the gainsayers* *Titus 1. 9.* These are *αἱρετικοὶ ἀνδρώνες*, *2 Tim. 2. 2.* the *faithful men*, the *Peoffees* in truth, to whom truth is committed, they are the *salt of the Earth*, *Mat. 5. 13.* those that must season the world with gracious principles ; therefore they must above all others labour in the defence of the Truth, otherwise they are compared to ** dumb dogs that bark not* when the thieves come to steal away the treasure. Now ministers must contend partly by preaching, warning the people of the Wolves that are abroad, *Acts 20. 29.* Partly by *disputing*, *Acts 15. 2. & 18. ult.* that by the knocking of flints light may fly out, and that Truth may beat its enemy hand to hand in the open field : And partly by *writing*, † for many times disputes are carried on with so much tumult and popular noise, that truth is lost in the crowd ; besides, by this means we are an help to posterity, that together with the *poison* the *antidote* may be transmitted to them.

VERSE IV.

* *Isa. 56. 10, 11.*
† *Alteris vici-
bus contentio-
so June uer-
dic in vesp-
ram traximus
obstreperibus
etiam quibus-
dam spectanti-
bus singulorum,
nubilo quodam
veritas obum-
brabatur. Tert.
contra Judaeos,*

V E R S E I V.

For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the Grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.

Jude having made way into their affections by a *Salutation*, which according to the wont of the *Apostles*, breatheth out *spiritual* and *heavenly* wishes for their good; he doth in the third Verse exhort and engage them to a constant defence of the truth; and now the *necessity* or *occasion* of such an Exhortation is declared, namely, because false Teachers were got abroad, and had slyly taken up the general name and profession of Christians; therefore in faithfulness he could not chuse but warn them of the danger:

The whole Epistle is spent in the Description of *Hereticks*, their sins and punishments: in this Verse they are described by four things. 1. By their entrance into the Church, [*Certain men crept in unawares.*] 2. By their condition before God, [*who were before of old ordained to this condemnation.*] 3. By the disposition of their spirits, [*ungodly men.*] 4. By the course of their doctrines and conversations, where two things are charged upon them: 1. Abusing the Gospel, [*turning the grace of our Lord into lasciviousness.*] 2. Denying Jesus Christ in his Natures and Offices, [*denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.*]

First, Let us begin with the description of their entrance into the Church, [*There are certain men crept in unawares:*] Some say they are not named, as not being worthy, or rather it not being necessary, they being so plainly described; and indeed 'tis usual with the *Apostles*, who rather dealt against *things* than *persons*, to suppress the *name*, and describe the *error* or *sin*. But what is the meaning of this first thing laid to their charge, *they crept in unawares*? I answer, It may imply their entrance into the Church under a colour and shew of profession: *Wicked men* *Observ.*
may

may creep into the best Church; God permitteth it not only for their own hardening, but for our trouble and trial: Paul complaineth of false brethren privily brought in to spy out their liberty, Gal. 2: 7. and the adversaries of Jerusalem said, Ezra 4: 1. *Let us build with you, for we seek your God as ye do;* but 'twas with an intent to hinder the work: so Simon Magus got to be baptized, Acts 8. as thieves seek to be entertained in the house, that they may have the more opportunity to work mischief whilest the good man is asleep. Learn hence to be more watchfull in admissions to the Church; no perils so great as those occasioned by false Brethren: We think to fill the Church, but we doe fill the house with thieves; wicked men ever prove a trouble: 'Tis an easie matter to fill the Church by remitting the rigor and severity of Discipline; but Heaven is never the fuller, but the emptier: for wicked men are hardened and confirmed in their own security, and the Church never fareth the better, * it loseth in strength what it gets in breadth, as a river doth, and zeal is lessened the more the number is increased: yea wicked men usually prove a trouble, and we come to wish afterward we had been more strict: 'tis said, Acts 5: 13. 14. *Of the rest durst no man joyn himself unto them, but the people magnified them, and Believers were the more added unto the Lord, multitudes both of men and women.* 'Tis spoken upon the occasion of the sudden death of Ananias and Sapphira; it terrified the hypocrites, but brought in more sound believers; for of the rest durst no man joyn, that is, of such as Ananias and Sapphira were, Believers in shew, but carnal in heart; they saw 'twas no dallying with God in such matters: Just so, when the Church keepeth a straight hand, hypocrites dare not joyn, but sound Believers will the sooner, and then the Church though it be a lesser body, is more sound, healthy, and active. But what Rule must we go by? must we go by outward and general profession? I answer, This place will give us some direction; as far as we can discern men, so far may we judge of them; for the entrance of these men is here declared to be clancular and surreptitious; if the Church had known them, or looked to them so warily as it should, the mischief had been prevented. * Bellarmine himself confesseth, *That the intention of the Church is onely to gather Believers into a Body, and if it knew the wicked and unbelieving*

* Multiplicatio fidei populi
fides imminuta
est; & crescentibus filiis mater agrotat;
quantum copia accessit, tantum disciplina recessit, inaudito genere processus & recessus, crescent simul & decrescent.
Salvian de Gubernat.

* Ecclesia ex intentione fideles tantum colligit, & non osses impios & incredulos eos aut nunquam admittet, aut casu admissos excludet. Bellar. de Ecclesia c. 10.

believing, it would either not admit them, or being admitted by chance, it would cast them out. 'Tis good to be strict, lest by promiscuous admissions we bring in such a mischief to the Church as we cannot easily get rid of. *Observ. 2.*

2. It may note their intrusion or invasion of the Office of Preaching; presuming without a Warrant, or coming into the fold not by the door, in the regular established way, false Teachers usually running unsent, 'tis often charged upon them in the Scriptures: None so prone to errors as those that have a defect in their calling. Christ when he prayeth for a blessing on the Apostles labours, he useth that as an argument. *John 17. 18. I have sent them into the world:* They that are loth to submit their gifts to publick approbation draw a just suspicion upon themselves; How came they to you? did they creep in? or were they solemnly admitted? When Elements are out of their place they breed confusion: When men are out of their place they are not a blessing, but a mischief to the Church.

3. The two former fences may be allowed, but I rather prefer a third; their creeping into the peoples hearts and affections by plausible pretences and insinuations, intill their errors drop by drop before they could be observed, and pretending themselves to be friends of Truth and Piety. I do prefer this fence, partly because he saith only [crept in,] without mentioning either Church or Office; but chiefly, because this Epistle is but the abridgement of the second Epistle of Peter, as will easily appear to those that doe compare them: now there 'tis said, *2 Pet. 2. 1. They shall privily bring in damnable heresies, denying the Lord that bought them.* From this fence observe, That false Teachers use to varnish over and mask the face of Error with plausible pretences, that unawares we may take it into our bosoms: The Apostle speaketh of their sleights and cunning craftiness, *Ephes 4. 14.* Their sleights and pretences are many, I shall touch upon a few. First, Sometimes greater strictness, *Col. 2. 18. Which things have a shew of wisdom, and neglect of* the body: rigorous observances and outward mortifications, as the Papists do. 2. Special meekness; *Ravening Wolves in sheeps clothing, Mat. 7. 15.* * as if they were all for love and kindness; Absalom stole away the peoples hearts by this artifice, *2 Sam. 15. 2.* 3. Higher Gospel strains; therefore doth Paul speak so much

Observ. 3.

* Sic Sossianus Novatianus Episcopus apud Veditium, in Præf. veteris Ecclesiæ, in Præf. c. 34.

much against the other Gospel, Gal. 1. 3. and the other Jesus, 2 Cor. 11. 4. namely, such an one as they had set up. 4. Self-denial; some false Teachers at Corinth would take no maintenance, to grace Paul; see 2 Cor. 11. 12, &c. this was their glorying, that they would preach freely; and whereas they contributed to the relief of Paul, to them it needed not. 5. Greater learning and notions of a newer and more sublime strain, Oppositions of science falsely so called, 1 Tim. 6. 20. Platonick speculations, ungrounded subtleties. 6. Greater favour and liberty to Nature; They promise liberty, and allure through the lusts of the flesh, 2 Pet. 2. 18. representing the faithful Ministers of Christ, as envying the contentment of your natures, and burdening you with exactions too rigorous; therefore the Apostle saith, I am afraid lest any through subtilty beguile you, as the Devil did Eve, 2 Cor. 11. 3. How was that? I answer, By insinuating a kind of envy in God, as if he did begrudge them the perfection and freedom of their natures; Gen. 3. 5. God knoweth that your eyes shall be opened, &c. So they think others are too strict, and lay too many restraints upon your carnal desires, and by this means allure many loose and unstable Souls. 7. Many times pretending the defence of that Truth, which they secretly impugn; as Pelagius talked altogether of grace; and * Faustus Rhegiensis retending to oppose the Pelagians, did but more covertly own their Cause.

* Faustus Rhegiensis dum captiose videri vultis pugnare contra Pelagianos, compertum fuit Pelagium favens. Ithodor.

† Rev. 17. 5.
* See the Right Reverend and most learned Doctor Aspers A letter to the Jesuites Challe ge.

Uses of this Point are divers. 1. For Information, it sheweth us the Reason why we cannot set down the precise beginnings of Errors, because they are privily brought in: † *Mystery* is written in the Whores forehead; The leak is not espied many times, though the ship be ready to sink: The Origins of Heresie are like the Fountain of Nile, obscure and hidden; a man may lose himself in the Labyrinth of Antiquity, before he can find them out. * *The Roman Apostasy is a Mystery of Iniquitie, that stole into the Church disguised and by degrees*: So that the beginning of it is not so easily stated as of other heresies, that are full grown at their first appearance. 2. It informeth us of the odiousness of Error; it dareth not appear in its own colours, nor be seen in its own face: therefore Satan when he would set any error on foot, he maketh choice of the most subtil instruments that they may put a varnish upon it; as when he

h: tempted *Eve*, he made use of the *Serpent*, the most subtil of all the beasts of the field, *Gen. 3. 1.* whereas the Lord chooseth the plainest instruments, and hath commanded them to use all simplicity and godly conversation, *2 Cor. 1. 12.* for Truth is so lovely in it self, that it needeth no borrowed colours. 3. It informeth us what reason those that are over you in the Lord have to press you to Caution; excuse their holy jealousy, *2 Cor. 11. 3.* all is but need: we must bark when we see a wolf, though in a sheeps garment; our silence and negligence doth but give them an advantage: *Whilest the husbandman slept, the enemy came and sowed tares, Mat. 13. 35.* 4. It presseth you to skill and watchfulness; you had need be found in the faith, that you may discern between good and evil, yea to have your senses exercised, *Heb. 5. ult.* A soft credulity is soon abused, *Prov. 15.* The simple believeth every word: There is no reason but knowledge should cost us pains as well as gracious conversation; 'Tis a matter of great skill to be a through Christian; there is a great deal of Sophistry and cunning abroad: if you follow the cry, you are in danger of engaging in a confederacy against God; if you stick to receive Customs, there may be Error there too: if you run after every novelty, on the other hand, you will soon be led into the bogs of Error and Prophaneness; therefore go to him for direction that hath the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. But you need not only skill, but care and watchfulness; 'Tis not good to drink too freely of suspected Fountains: let not your affections surprize your judgement; we admire the persons, the gifts, and so easily swallow the doctrine: Try the spirits, *1 John 4. 1. 1 Thes. 5. 21.* When there is counterfeit gold abroad, we use the Touchstone: Truth loseth nothing by being tried, and you lose nothing, for then your affections are better wounded: Prove all things, no man is infallible; an implicit faith begets but a fond affection.

Secondly, These Seducers are described by their condition before God, [*Who were before of old ordained to this condemnation,*] *παιδας of old*, that is, from all eternity, for so the matter here spoken of imports; *πρωτογενητος*, we translate it *before ordained*, but the word signifieth written as in a Book: 'tis usual in Scripture to compare Gods Decrees to a Book; as Christ alledging Gods Decree for his mission into the World, saith,

Psal. 40. 8. In the volume of thy Book 'tis written of me: The meaning of the metaphor is to shew that these Decrees are as certain and determinate as if he had a Book wherein to write them: Now these are said to be *written before of old*, to shew that though they crept in unawares as to the Church, yet not as to God; they fell under the notice of his Decrees before ever they acted in this evil way. 'Tis further added, that they were ordained or writtē down in Gods Book, *eis nēma*, for judgement or condemnation; the word is indifferent to either sence, for *nēma* is often put for *καταnēma*; thus it is to be taken here for condemnation, as appeareth by that place of *Peter*, *ἀποφαινεῖς τὰς ἀκαθάρσιας*, damnable heresies, 2 *Pet. 2. 1.* and *Verie 3. Whose damnation of a long time slumbereth not*; as he saith here, *of old ordained to this judgement*: The meaning of the whole is, that they were such as were left to themselves to bring upon themselves by their own sins and errors, a just condemnation.

1. *Observ.* That the Object of the divine Decrees are not only mens *ways*, but mens *persons*: He doth not only say that their condemnation was pre-ordained, but they also were ordained of old to this condemnation. I observe this, because many say that Gods Decrees do only respect *actions* and the *events*; we see they respect *persons* also, we have no cause to mince matters, when the Scriptures speak to the point so fully and roundly:

- Again from that [*ordained or forewritten*] observe, God hath
2. *Observat.* his Books and Registers, wherein the *persons, behaviours, and eternal estates of all men* are recorded. At the Day of Judgement, these Books shall be opened, *Rev. 20. 12.* Therefore it should be our care to be able to read our names written in the *Book of Life*, then which there cannot be a greater priviledge, *Luke 10. 30.* And it presseth Caution; all that we do standeth upon record; *our speeches, Mal. 3. 16, 17.* our thoughts, 1 *Cor. 4. 5.* our *actions*, *Jer. 17. 1.*

- Again observe, That in all those things which appertain to the
3. *Observat.* judgement of sinners, God doth nothing rashly, but proceedeth by fore-sight and pre-ordination.

- Again, No man ever perverted the Truths of God but to his
4. *Observat.* own loss. They were ordained to this judgement, that is, that by their sins they should come to such a ruine: We play with opinions, but do not consider that *damnation* is the end of them

them; The way of *Truth* is the way of *Life*, but *error* tendeth to *death*.

These things might be observed, but I shal' rather pitch upon two points; one *particular*, and restrained to the scope of the Context; the other *general*, as being taken from the consideration of the expressions in their full latitude: The first is, *That Heresies and Errors do not fall out by chance, but according to the certain pre-ordination and fore-knowledge of God.* There s. Observ.

are two Reasons for it, *Nothing can come to pass against his Will, and Nothing can come to pass without his Will.*

1. Not without his Will: If a *Sparrow* cannot fall to the ground without our heavenly Father, *Mat. 10. 39.* that is, cannot be taken and slain without the Will of God, then certainly nothing can be imagined, which God did not foresee, or which he could not have hindred: there is nothing *so small*, but the Lord taketh cognizance of it: nothing *so evil*, but he turneth it to good. Exempt any thing from Providence, and you weaken that respect which is due from the Creatures to God: If Satan may do what he will, and God only be a *looker on*, then the *Devil worship* of the Heathens would seem more rational; 'twas their custom, first to *appease the angry gods*, lest they should hurt them, and then to *invoke the propitious*: Upon this doctrine we might fear the Devil and carnal men, though God be propitious, for many things are done whether he will or no.

2. Not against his Will; for then God should make a creature too hard for himself; Things may be against his *revealed Will*, for that is a Rule to try the creatures, but not against his *secret Will*, for that would make God impotent and weak. Things that are most against his *revealed Will*, yet fall under the ordination of his *secret Will*; and whilst men break *Commandments*, they fulfil *Decrees*: His revealed will sheweth what *should be done*, his secret Will *what will be done*. Briefly, the concurrence of God in and about the errors of men may be conceived in these things. 1. He denieth *grace and light*, which might direct and sanctifie; He is debter to no man, and may do with his own according to his good pleasure, *Mat. 20. 15.* He is not bound to give grace to all, and therefore 'tis no prejudice to his goodness to pass by some. 2. He leaveth difficulty enough in the Word, that men who will not be satisfied may be hard-

ned : *Mark 4. 11, 12. All these things were spoken in Parables, that seeing they might see and not perceive; that is for a punishment of their wilful blindness and hardness: Corrupt nature stumbles in Gods plainest wayes; the Word is clear enough to them that have a mind to understand it, and yet difficult enough to them that have a mind to harden themselves into a prejudice. Non periclitator dicere (saith Tertullian) ipsas Scripturas ita disposita esse, ut materiam subministrarent hereticis. So the Lord himself saith, Jer. 6. 21. Behold, I will lay stumbling blocks before this people; that is, suffer them to stumble at their own prejudices.* 3. God leaveth them to follow the course of their own hearts: he doth not incline and compel their wills, or infuse evil into them, only suffereth them to follow the carnal bent, and corrupt ambition of their own hearts, *Hosea 4. 17. Let him alone, 1 King, 22. 22. Go forth and do so; Psal. 31. 12. I gave them up to their own counsels, he hindereth not their wickedness; Yea, permitteth it, that so his wise counsels may take place.* 4. God ordereth it for good, thereby bringing great advantage to his own name, *Exod. 9. 16. For this cause I raised thee up to shew in thee my power; great shakings and tumults discover much of God to the world; the Devil picketh out the most polished shafts in all the quiver of mankind: and yet still the Lord maintaineth the Lor of his Inheritance; Yea, God doth not only advance his Name, and discover the glory of his Providence, in protecting the Church, notwithstanding Satans factors, and the abettors of his cause and kingdom: But also causes the Truths that are questioned to shine the more brightly, as being more strongly vindicated and asserted; as a Torch shineth the brighter when 'tis waved with the wind; such times put men the more upon the study and love of Truth; doctrines not being taken up upon trust, but sound conviction: besides error being permitted, manifesteth the approved, 1 Cor. 11. 19, as a quick smart wind severeth the solid grain, from the Chaff: and 'tis a means to ingage our dependance upon God for knowledge and instruction; Christs Prophetical Office would lye idle and useless, were not the chains of consent sometimes broken, and the Language divided, some saying one thing, some another; as the difference between the Jews and the Samaritans about the place of worship, maketh the woman to go to Christ for satisfaction*

saction, *John 4. 20.* Once more, Gods permission of errorr conduceth to the just ruine of his enemies : *Offences must be, but not to that man by whom they come, Mat. 18. 6, 7.* So *1 Sam. 2. 25.* *Elyes Sons would not harken to the voyce of their Father, because the Lord had a mind to slay them :* By their own voluntary sins God bringeth them to their just ruine and condemnation; God lets them alone to wanton and play away their own salvation, if they will turn *Seekers, Familists, Rascals Atheists,* Let them alone.

Uses. The Point may be applyed many wayes. 1. Here is comfort to those that regard the affairs of *Sion* ; all the confusion, and troubles that are in the Church, are ordered by a wise God, he will bring some good issue out of them, some *glory to his Name*, wherein the Saints rejoyce as much as in their *own welfare* ; some good to the Church : Observe, hast not thou been more confirmed in the truth ? engaged to a more frequent recourse to Christ in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge ? Hast thou not seen more of Gods Providence displayed by these tumults, &c. 2. It checketh fear, 'tis all in the hands of a good God, as God trieth you to see what you will do ; so you must wait upon God to see what he will do : let him alone, in and by all, he will bring forth his work in due time.

3. It sheweth their wickedness that take occasion to turn *Atheists*, from the multitude of errorrs, when the Church is rent into so many factions, men fool it as if there were no God, and the whole Gospel were but an imposture, and well-devised Fable ; that's the reason why Christ prayeth, *John 17. Let them be perfect in one, that the world may know that thou hast sent me,* (i.e.) that they might not suspect me for an Impostour : usually we find that thoughts of Atheism are wont to haunt us upon these occasions ; but there is little reason for it, for all these things are *fore-known* by God, *fore-told* by God, *They must be,* *1 Cor. 11 19. Mat. 24. 6.* And never is there so much of God and of the *Beauty of Truth* discovered, as when errorrs abound ; so that if there were not errorrs, there would be more cause of suspition ; where all things run with a *smooth and full consent*, and were never questioned, then the *strength and worth* of them is not tried : But *The words of the Lord are pure words, as Silver tryed in a Furnace of Earth, purified seven times, thou shalt keep them*

them O Lord, thou shalt preserve them from this generation, *Psal.* 12. 6, 7. 4. 'Tis a ground of Prayer in times of delusion: Lord this was ordained by thee in wisdom, let us discern thy glory in it and by it, more and more; the Church argueth, that there was not only Pilates malice and Herods malice, but Gods hand and Counsel in the crucifixion of Christ, *Acts* 4. 28. To do whatsoever thy Hand and Counsel determined before to be done: Lord we know there is thy Counsel in it, and thy Counsel still tendeth to good, &c. God loveth to be owned in every Providence, and to be intreated to fulfil his own Decrees. 5. It informeth us what a foolish madnes it is, to think that God seeth not the sin which we secretly commit: surely he seeth it, for he foresaw it, before it was committed: Yea, from all Eternity.

6. *Observat.* So much for the first Point, the next is, *That from all Eternity some were decreed by their sins, to come unto judgement or condemnation*; Because this is one of the Texts which Divines bring to prove the general Doctrine of Reprobation. I shall here take occasion. 1. To open this Doctrine. 2. To prove it. 3. To vindicate it. 4. To apply it: In the First, you will understand the Nature: In the Second, the Reasons: In the third, the Righteousness; In the Fourth, the profit of the Doctrine of this Decree.

1. I shall open the Nature of it in several Propositions. 1. 'Tis an Eternal Decree: Gods Internal Acts are the same with his Essence, and therefore before all time, as he ever is Elected before all worlds, *Eph.* 1. 4. so are sinners reprobated, they are both in time and order, before ever the creature was, *Rom.* 9. 11. Before the Creatures had done either good or evil, it was said, Jacob have I loved, and Esau have I hated. Election and Reprobation are not a thing of yesterdy, and subsequent to the Acts of the creature; but from all Eternity. 2. There is a Decree and Pre-ordination, not only a naked fore-sight of those that perish: Some Lutherans say that Predestination is proper only to the Elect; but as to the Reprobate, there is only prescience or naked fore-knowledge: no Pre-ordination, lest they should make God the Author of the creatures sin and ruine; but these men fear where no fear is, the Scriptures shew that the greatest evil that ever was, did not only fall under the

Fore-knowledge, but determinate Counsel of God, Acts 2. 23. 'Twas not only fore-known, but unchangeably ordained and determined. 3. This Decree of God is founded in his own good will and pleasure; for there being nothing higher and greater then God, 'tis a great errour to suppose a cause of his will, either before it, whose it, or without it: Gods actions do all begin in himself, and his Will is the supream Reason, Mat. 11. 16. Even so Father because it seemed good in thy sight: Jesus Christ would give no other reason why th. Gospel was hidden from the wise and prudent, and revealed unto Babes: we are often disputing, why of two men that are equal in misery, the one should be taken, the other left; why the Lord will shew mercy to some that are no less unworthy then others; but when we have all done, we must meely rest in the Will and good Pleasure of God, Even so Father, &c. See Rom. 9. 18. He hath mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth: 'tis not from the foresight of our wills receiving or rejecting grace proposed, for then mans will would be made a superiour Cause to an act in God. 4. In this matter of Reprobation, Preterition, and Predamnation, must be carefully distinguished: Look as in Election, God hath decreed to bestow first, grace, and then glory, to the Decree of giving grace Preterition is opposed, to the Decree of giving glory, ordination unto judgement: Now Gods Preterition or passing by, is meely and barely from the good pleasure of God: But Predamnation presupposeth consideration of the creatures sin; both these parts of the Decree, are clearly set down in the word; Preterition, or passing by, Rev. 17. 8. Whose names were not written in the Book of Life, from the foundation of the world; so again, Rev. 13. 11. In other places you have Predamnation expretted, as 1. Thes. 5. 8. Appointed unto wrath, and here ordained to this judgement. 5. Those who are passed by, or not written in Gods Book, never attain to saving grace: 'tis not given to them, Mat. 13. 11. To them it is given to know the Mysteries of the Kingdom, but to you it is not given: Yea, it is said to be hidden from them, Mat 11. 26: they may have common gifts, or be under such a common work of the Spirit, as leaveth them without excuse; but because the Lord hath passed them by, effectual grace is not given to them, without which they cannot beleeve and be saved, John 10. 26.

To believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, that is, not elected of my Father; saving grace runneth in the channel of Election, so Acts 13. 48. *As many as were ordained to eternal life believed.* Gods special gifts are dispensed according to his Decrees. 6. *Men being left of God and destitute of saving grace, freely, and of their own accord fall into such sins as render them obnoxious to the just wrath and vengeance of God.* Rom. 11. 7. *The Election hath obtained, and the rest were hardened;* freely and of their own accord, they turned all things to their own judgement and ruine: so Rev. 13. 11. *The dwellers on Earth did worship the whore, whose names were not written in the Book of Life,* that is, they turned aside to Antichristian defilements, and pollutions. 7. *Gods Decree concerning such persons is immutable, it is not rescinded and disannulled, but is fully executed and accomplished in the damnation of the sinner; the Lords Counsels are all unchangeable, both as to Election,* 2 Tim. 2. 18. Heb. 6. 17. *and as to Reprobation, no Reprobate can be an Elect person, nor an Elect person a Reprobate,* Job 12. 14. *He shutteth up a man and there can be no opening, and Job 22. 13. He is in one mind, who can turn him:* In Gods Books there is no putting in and crossing out of names; but as the number of the Elect is definite and certain, they cannot be more, and they cannot be less, so also the Reprobate. 8. *This Eternal, Irrevocable purpose of God, of leaving sinners to themselves, that by their sins they may come to judgement, is for Gods glory,* Rom. 9. 22. *What if God willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long-suffering, the vessels fitted to destruction.* All Gods Decrees, Wors, Providences, tend to the further Discovery, of himself in the eye of the creatures.

2. Let me prove that there is such a Decree, by Scriptures; for reason here hath no place: take here three that are most full; the first is, 1 Thes. 5. 9. *God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by Jesus Christ,* which plainly implyeth that some are appointed unto wrath: The second is, 1 Per. 2. 8 where the Apostle speaketh of some that were disobedient and refused Christ, *whereunto also they were appointed:* The third place is Proverbs 16. 4. *God made all things for himself, and the wicked for the day of evil:* The drift of that place is to shew that

that both *Creation* and *Predestination* were for Gods glory, and he instanceth in that part of *Predestination* which concerneth the wicked, because it is hardest to be digested and believed.

But now for the *Reasons*, why God hath chosen some and appointed others by sin to come unto judgement : I can only tell you that *Gods judgements are past finding out*, *Rom. 11. 33.* We must *admire*, we cannot *search* them to the bottom : so far as God hath revealed his Will, we may clearly judge that 'tis for the discovery of his *Justice* and *Mercy*, neither of which could have been discovered to the world with that advantage, had it not been for this double Decree of God to save some and leave others to their own ruine : if grace were given to *all*, how should the world know that God were *free* : Again, if *all* were pardoned, how should the world know that God were *just* ; in *Election*, God discovereth the *freeness* of his grace, *Eph. 1. 6.* 'tis love, that we enjoy grace, *elective love*, that we enjoy it alone : In *Reprobation*, God discovereth his *Sovereignty*, and by it, the *severity* of his justice, and power of his wrath. *Rom. 9. 22.* in chusing one and leaving another, there God discovereth his *Liberty*, and that he doth not act out of *servile Necessity*, and his *severity* in the eternal pains of them that perish in their sins.

3. Let me vindicate this Doctrine, which in the eyes of some seemeth to blemish the *Justice* of God, to infringe the comfort of man, Yea to abolish the duty of man ; therefore it needeth a little clearing, reason cannot easily digest this strong meat : partly because we are apt to reprehend what we cannot comprehend ; partly because this Doctrine checketh carnal ease and security, which is usually fed with a general hope, and presumption ; That the God that made us will save us, that he will not damne his creatures, but is merciful to all, &c. now this awakneth us, when we hear that grace floweth in a narrower Channel : partly because aspiring man is loath to submit to this absolute Lordship and Sovereignty of God, that he should dispose of his creatures according to his own pleasure : our ambition is to be *αυτοκρατορ*, Lords of our selves ; Man that would be as God taketh it ill to be as a Beast made to be taken and destroyed : Upon all these prejudices man is loath to receive this Doctrine, therefore it needeth to be cleared.

1. In regard of God, that you may not pollute and stain his Excellency with impure and prejudicial thoughts: you will say, is God just, that only upon his will and pleasure ordaineth his creatures to condemnation? have not the Reprobates cause to complain if he hath passed a Decree upon which their condemnation doth infallibly follow? I answer, 1. Our understandings are not the measure of Gods Justice, but his own will, things may be just, though the reasons of them do not appear to us, humane reason groweth giddy by peeping into the deep of Gods decrees, our work is not to *dispute*, but *wonder*: Gods freedom is a riddle to Reason, besides though we will not be bound to Laws, yet we are willing God should be bound: Gods Actions must not be measured by any *external rule*, things are good because God willeth them, for his Will is Justice it self.

2. The Electing of some, and passing by of others, is not an Act of *Justice*, but *Dominion*; for he doth not act here as a *Judge*, but as a *Lord*: 'tis a matter of *favour*, not of *right and wrong* condemnation of a man for sin, or *punishing* a man for sin, is an act of *Justice*; but to *have mercy*, or *not to have mercy*, that dependeth merely upon *Gods Will*, otherwise it would follow, that God were a *debtor* unto man: *Justice* supposeth *debt*, or something due; no *wrong* is done them in not giving grace, the Elect can speak of *undeserved grace*, and the Reprobate of *deserved punishment*; when we are not bound to do good, if we act according to pleasure, there is no injury, as in invitations, preferences, and all acts of favour: we cannot indure that a right should be challenged; the good man in the Parable pleaded, *I may do with mine own as it pleaseth me*, Mat. 20, 15. The Lord may justly challenge grace as his own, and therefore leave him to his pleasure in the distribution; for he is bound to none.

3. Gods not giving grace to the Reprobate, is not *their sin*, but *their misery*, Preterition made them *miserable*, but not *sinful*: it doth not infer a *Coaction* and *Compulsion* to sin, sin followeth upon it not as an *effect* but a *consequent*; as upon the absence of the Sun, darkness doth necessarily follow, and yet the Sun is not the cause of darkness: In grace God *purposeth* God *worketh*, in sin God *ordereth* the sin, and *maketh use of it* to the glory of his Justice: but man sinneth *freely*: the water while it runneth its own course, serveth the end of the Lord of the Soyl, in driving Mills,

Mills, and bringing Fish into his Ponds, and overflowing his Meadows, &c. So God causeth not sin in any, only *permitted* it and *endureth* it, and *serveth* his righteous ends of it, *Rom. 9. 24.* He endureth with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted for destruction; he prepareth the vessels of mercy (as the Apostle there expresseth) but *endureth* the vessels of wrath, while they fit themselves for ruine. 4. Sin is the cause of punishment, though Gods Will is the cause why they are passed by; they are not punished because *not elected*, but because *not obedient*. Wherefore doth a living man complain, but for his sins, *Lam. 3. 39.* 'tis here as it was in that case; David gave order to Solomon, that Joab and Shimei should *not dye in peace*, 1 King, 2. Yet Davids order was no cause of Joabs death, but his own treason, nor of Shimeis death, but his own flight: God never dameth the creature, or decreeth to damn it without respect of sin; Gods Will is the cause of *Preterition*, his Justice is the cause of *Predamnation*, for damnation is an act of *punitive Justice*: God is *so just*, that he doth not condemn any, but for sin; so *gracious*, that he doth not condemn every man that doth sin. 5. The formal and proper end of God in Reprobation, is not the *eternal destruction* of the creature, but the *discovery of his own Justice* or glory, promoted or shining forth in and by that destruction: in *Election* God desireth and effecteth the salvation of a sinner in a subordination to his own glory; but in *Preterition*, God endureth a sinner with much long-suffering, till by his own destruction, he bringeth to him the glory of his Justice, *Ezek. 23. 11.* As I live, saith the Lord, I desire not the death of a sinner; So *Ezek. 18. 23.* Have I any pleasure at all, that the wicked should dye? the meaning is, God doth not will these things with such a will as is *terminated in the destruction of the creature*, but only ordereth them in a *subordination to his own glory*, or in plainer terms, God delighteth not in the *destruction of a sinner*, as 'tis the *destruction of the creature*; but as it is the *execution of Justice*: in the execution of a malefactor, there is a difference between punishment and destruction; his punishment is of the Judge, his destruction is of himself; so in this case, Thy destruction is of thy self O Israel, *Hos. 13. 9.*

2. Concerning the second Objection, whether it doth not infringe our comfort, and discourage men from looking after their

Salvation ? if I am elected, I shall be saved ; if I am not Elected, I shall be damned : thus many men plead (say they) and how will you stir up the *negligent*, and encourage the *distressed*, supposing that doctrine which you have laid down.

I Answer, this scruple is but *effected*, not *offered*, and therefore should be *chidden*, and not *Answered* : A questioning Gods *secret will* when we know his *revealed* : Gods *secret will* hath relation to his *own actions*, his *revealed Will* to *ours* ; we must not look to Gods *Will in the depth of his Counsel*, but his *Precepts* : not what God will do himself, but what he will have us to do ; God saith, *Believe in Christ*, and *thou shalt be saved*, that's our rule. A Physician offereth cure to all that will come ; 'twere a madness to dispute away the opportunity, and say, I doe not know whether he intendeth it to me : if men were ready to perish in the deep waters, and a Boat should be offered to carry to Land as many as would come in it, to be making scruples when we are ready to be drowned, whether this help be intended to us, yea, or no, were a very fond thing : in such cases we would not *wrangle*, but *thankfully take hold* of what is offered.

2. This Doctrine can be no *ground of despair* to any, because Reprobation is a *sealed book*, no man for the present can know his Reprobation ; nor is to believe himself to be a Reprobate ; but is called upon to use the means that he may be saved : he is no Reprobate that falleth into sin, but he that persevereth in sin unto the end ; therefore it is *no good conclusion*, I am a *sinner*, therefore I am a *Reprobate*, 'tis midnight, therefore 'twill never be day : this is a Book sealed with seven seals, none but the Lamb can open it.

3. The opposite Opinion is encumbered with more difficulties and scruples : what comfort can a man have in *Universal Redemption* ? a man cannot have *solid comfort* in that which is common to good and bad, to those that shall be damned, and those which shall be saved, all comfort ariseth from a *practical syllogism*, now make the *practical syllogism*, according to the principles of *Universal grace*, *Christ died for all men*, I am a man, therefore for me, where humanity, or being a man is made the ground of claim and interest ; and then unless, with *Puccius* and *Huberus*, we hold *Universal salvation*, as well as *Universal redemption*, the argument will yield no comfort ? how can I, according to that opinion, comfort my self in the death

of Christ, when men may be damned that have no interest in it ?

4. As to the other part of this Objection, concerning the profit of this Doctrine, and whether it doth not take off men from industry, so some have thought ? But I Answer no, For, 1. God hath enjoyned the *end* and the *means* together : *Except ye abide in the Ship, ye cannot be saved* (saith *Paul* to them that sayled with him) a Decree was past for their safety, that not a man of them should perish ; yet they must abide in the Ship ; God doth infallibly stir up the Elect to the use of means, as well as bring to such an end. 2. The right use of the Doctrine of Re- probation is to put us upon *examination or diligence* ; upon *examination* whether we believe in Christ, or have truly repented, that we may *make our Calling and Election sure*, 2 *Pet.* 1. 10. For by this means is the sealed Fountain broken open. Or upon *diligence*, in case you find no fruits of Elective love : pray read, hear, meditate, wait, *work out your salvation*, &c. 3. The *Doctrine of Election* is of great use in the spiritual life, without it we cannot understand the freeness of Gods love, which is the great means to quicken us to praise God, and to beget love to God again ; for *as fire kindleth fire, so doth love beget love* ; 'tis Gods glory to be served *out of love*, and *free consent* : the devil ruleth his slaves by a servile awe : well then, if love set love a work, and the best sight of Gods love be in Gods decree ; let them say, if they dare, that the Doctrine of Gods Decree, is an unprofitable Doctrine : again, nothing taketh off *carnal confidence*, and *glorying in our selves* more then Gods choice, according to his own pleasure ; nothing is a *greater support in afflictions*, especially in distresses of Conscience. In short, nothing is such a *firm bond of love between believers*, as the Consideration that they are all Predetermined from all Eternity, to the everlasting enjoyment of the same Inheritance, those Obligations which last only for this world, cannot be so firm a tie.

3. The next Objection is ; How can God call upon them to believe, whom he hath passed by in the Counsels of his Will, and intendeth never to give them grace, without which they cannot believe ? I Answer, God may require men to believe, though he never intended to give them faith ; for there is a great deal of difference between his *Decree* and his *Law* : his

his Law sheweth what *must be*, his Decree what *shall be*: God never said, *all shall believe*; but he hath said the contrary 2 *Thef.* 3. 2. but *all must believe*, that he hath said again and again, the Gospel doth not signifie, *this or that man shall be saved*; but *Whoever believeth shall be saved*, as truly as it can be said to *John or Thomas*, or any elect person, *If you do not believe, you shall be damned*; so surely may it be said to a Reprobate, to *Judas*, or any other, *If you believe you shall be saved*; if the Reprobate have a like favour with the Elect in the general offer of grace they are left without excuse, the tender being so great, and so far the same unto both, though the Elects receiving be the effect of special grace; yet the Reprobates rejecting is without excuse, he voluntarily turning back upon his own mercies.

So much briefly for the vindication of this Doctrine.

4. Let me now apply it. 1. Let the Elect so much the more admire Gods love to them, because that some are passed by; your mercies are not every ones mercies; Gods aym herein was, to commend his mercy to the *Vessels of mercy*, *Rom.* 9. 23. If he had passed us by, we could not have blamed his love; if he had punished us eternally, we could not have blamed his Justice; consider, God hath made as much interest in them as in you. *All things are mine, saith the Lord, Ezek.* 18. 4. he was their Creator as well as yours, and we are all in our blood involved in the same condemnation; he saw as much of original sin in you as in them, we lay in the same polluted Mass; Oh, that free grace should make such a difference! He had as much reason to chuse *Judas* and *Simon Magus*, as you; was not *Esaú Jacobs Brother*? *Mal.* 1. 2. in all points alike, but only in Gods choice, when men chuse, 'tis for worth; who would chuse crooked Timber to make Vessels of honour? yet thus doth the Lord single out the worst and most depraved natures, to form them into a people for himself; how sensibly many times did God make a distinction between you and others in the same Ordinance? One is taken and another left, and one is taken to grace, and another left to perish in his own ways, others it may be were hardened by the same Sermon by which you were converted. Oh how ravishing is the sight of Gods love in Election, and the distinct courses of his Providence!

3. To press us to *diligence*; To make our Election sure, that we may be out of the fear of being in the number of Reprobates; the great question that concerneth the comfort of thy soul is, *Whether thou be ordained to eternall Life, or no?* Now, if thou beest *negligent and careless*, and refusest to use the means of salvation, the case is decided, though little to thy comfort; *thou judgest thy self to be unworthy of eternal life, Acts 13. 48.* A lazy, carnal, careless man, doth but provide matter of despair for himself: there are *some steps* towards the accomplishment of the Decree of Reprobation; As *foolish obstinacy against the counsels of the word, a being given up to the spirit of error, a constant neglect of means, and hardening of our selves in the abuse of grace, &c. all these are black marks*; a man may recover, but your soul is *nigh to death*; therefore beware, lest thou be found one of them who by sin are ordained to come to judgement; *Elyes Sons* hearkened not to the Counsel of their Father, because the Lord had a minde to slay them.

3: We are now come to that part of the Description [*ungodly men*]; * The word signifieth *without worship*, and is sometimes applyed to *Heathens*, and men that live without the knowledge and worship of the true God; at other times to *wicked men*, that acknowledge the true God, but walk unsuitably to their knowledge and profession; that we may find out who are these men, let us see what is *ungodliness*, a sin much spoken of, but little known; the word (as I said) signifieth *without worship*. *Worship* is the chiefest and most solemn respect of the creature to God, and therefore 'tis put for the whole subjection and obedience that we owe to him, and when any part of that service, respect or honor, is denied, or withheld, we are guilty of *ungodlynests*. * Aristotle

That Pagans and men out of the Church, are signified by the term *ungodly*, appeareth by 1 Pet. 4. 18. *If judgement begin at the House of God, where shall the wicked and ungodly appear?* where the *ungodly* are plainly opposed to the *House of God*. Again the *unjustified estate* is expressed by *ungodliness*; as the Apostle when he speaketh of the justifying of *Abraham and David*, he gave the Lord this Title, *Rom. 4. 5. God that justifieth the ungodly*; and so Christ is said, *to dye for the ungodly, Rom 5. 9.* The reason of which expression is, because the people of the

Jews

Jews were divided into three ranks or sorts, there were *ἡ ἀγαθή*; the ungodly, *ἡ μέση* the just, and *ἡ ἀγαθή* the good; or to keep their own terms, there were *Reshaim*, the wicked or violent, and *Tsidikim*, the just, and *Chasidim* the good, or the bountiful; now (saith the Apostle) scarcely for a righteous man would one die; that is, for a man of a rigid innocency, but for the good man, that is, the bountiful, the useful, a man would even dare to dye; but Christ died for us when we were *Reshaim*, sinners, enemies, &c. Again, more especially, *ungodliness* implieth the transgression of the first Table, as *Rom. 1. 18.* where all sin is distinguished into *ἀσέβεια*, *ungodliness*, and *ἀνομία*, *unrighteousness*, *ungodliness* in respect of duty to God, and *unrighteousness* in respect of the duty to men; and also where sin is distinguished into *ungodliness* and *worldly lusts*, *Tit. 2. 12.* So that it chiefly signifieth that part of sin whereby we rob God of his honour, respect and service, established by the first Table; and it may be described to be a not giving God his right or due honour.

To clear it further, let me tell you, that there are four Notions, which are the ground of all Religion. 1. That God is, and is One. 2. That God is none of these things that are seen, but something more excellent. 3. That God hath a care of humane affairs, and judgeth with equity. 4. That the same God is maker of all things, without himself. And to these four Notions or Principles are suited the four Precepts of the first Table: in the first, we have Gods Unity: in the second, Gods Invisible Nature, and therefore Images are forbidden upon that ground, *Deut. 4. 12.* In the third, the knowledge of humane affairs, even of mens thoughts, and that's the foundation of an oath; for the third Commandment doth principally forbid perjury, and in an Oath God is invoked as a witness, chiefly of the heart, in which his Omniscience is acknowledged and appealed to as a Judge and Avenger, in which his Justice and Power is acknowledged; the next principle, that God is Creator and Governour of all things, is established by the fourth Commandment; for the Sabbath at first was instituted for that purpose, to keep up the memorial of the Creation in the world. Now out of these speculative Notions practicals flow of their own accord, &c: that God alone is to be worshipped, obeyed, honoured, trusted, and as far as we set up other confidences, or are ignorant

ignorant of his excellency, or deny God his worship and service, or serve him after an unworthy manner, superstitiously, carelessly, hypocritically, or have gross Opinions of his Essence, or exclude the dominion of his Providence, or cease to invoke his name to far we are guilty of ungodliness.

More Distinctly and closely, let me note, that God is to be acknowledged, as 1. The first Cause. 2. The chiefest Good. 3. As the Supreme Truth, and Authority. 4. As the last end; God is to be honoured as the first Cause that giveth being to all things, and hath his being from none; and so if we do not trust in him, or can trust any creature, rather than God: our Estates rather than God, or do not observe him in his Providence: the effects of his Mercy, Justice and Power, or do not acknowledge his Dominion in all events, and sanctifie the things which we use, by asking his leave and blessing in prayer: we are guilty of ungodliness. Again, God is to be acknowledged as the chiefest good, and therefore if we do not know him, often think of him, delight in communion with him, fear to offend him, care to please him, this neglect and contempt of God is ungodliness. Again, God is to be acknowledged as the Supreme truth and Authority, and therefore if we are not moved with his promises, threats, Counsels as the Gentiles were moved with the Oracles of their God; or as Gods people of old (when that dispensation was in use) with a voyce from Heaven, and do not submit to him, reverence him in Worship, subject our hearts and lives to his Lawes, 'tis ungodliness: once more, God is the last end, and therefore if in all acts Spiritual, Moral Natural, even those of the lightest consequence, we do not ayme at Gods glory. Still 'tis ungodliness.

In this Method, I shall endeavour to open this argument. And 1. Let us consider God as the first cause, and under that consideration, 1. Ignorance is a branch of ungodliness: I name it first, because 'tis the * cause of all disorder in worship or conversation; the Apostle saith, 3. Epist. John 11. He that doth evil, hath not seen God; right thoughts of God are the fuel which maintaineth the fire of Religion, which otherwise would soon decay and be extinguished: now generally people are ignorant of God, they know him as men born blind do fire, they can tell there is such a thing as fire, because it warmeth them, but what it is they cannot tell: So the whole world, and conscience pro-

* Hec prima
scelerum causa
mortalibus a-
gris naturam
nescire dei.

claimeth there is a God: the blindest man may see that, but they know little or nothing of his Essence, as he hath revealed himself in his Word: The Athenians had an Altar, and the Inscription was to the *unknown God*, and so do most Christians go on in a track of Customary worship, and so worship an *Idol* rather than God: so Christ telleth the *Samaritans*, *John 4. 22. Ye worship ye know not what*: 'Tis usual with men in a dark and blind superstition, to conform to the worship of their place, not considering *why*, or whom it is they worship: *gross ignorance* is a sign of no grace; for God hath no child so little but he knoweth his Father, *Jer. 31. 34: They shall all know me, from the least to the greatest*, some have better education than others greater helps and advantages of parts and Instruction: but they all have a necessary knowledge of God: Again, *gross ignorance* is a pledge of future judgement, *2 Thes. 1. 7. God will come in flaming fire, to render vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the Gospel*: many poor ignorant creatures are harmless, they do no wrong; Oh but they *know not God*, and that's wrong enough. * God will avenge it; to be ignorant of God that made them, is a matter of sadder consequence than you are aware; by those that *know not God*, in that place is meant, *Pagans*; for 'tis contradistinct to those that *obey not the Gospel*; but if there be vengeance for *Pagans* who have no other Apostles sent to them, but that those *natural Apostles* of Sun, Moon, and Stars, and have no other books wherein to study God, but *Shows of rain, and fruitful seasons*; if there be vengeance for them because they did not see and own a *first cause*? what is there for those that shut their eyes against the light of the Gospel! surely to be ignorant, now is a greater sin, than we think of. 2. When we do not depend upon him, 'tis ungodliness; *trust* and *dependence* is the ground of all commerce between us and God; and it's *greatest homage* and respect, which we yield to the *Creator and first cause*; now when men trust any creature rather than God, their Estates rather than God, they rob him of his peculiar hono-; That there is such a sin, appeareth by that, *Job 31. 34. If I had made gold my hope, or said to the fine gold, That thou art my confidence: If I rejoiced because my wealth is great, and my hand had gotten much, &c. Job* to vindicate himself from Hypocrisie, reckoneth up the usual sins of Hypocrites, amongst

* Psal. 27. 11.

amongst the rest this is one, *to make gold our confidence*: men are apt to think it the staff of their lives, and the stay of their posterity, and so their trust being intercepted; their hearts are diverted from God: 'tis an usual sin though little thought of: the great danger of riches is by *trusting in them*, Mark 10. 23, 24. When men are intrenched with in an *estate*, they think they are safe, secured against what ever shall happen, and so God is laid aside; let a man be intrenched within a *promise*, and yet he is full of fears and doubts; but *wealth breedeth security*, therefore *covetousness* is called *Idolatriy*, Eph. 5. 3. and the covetous man, an *Idolater*, Col. 3. 5. not so much because of his *love of money* as his *trust in money*; * the glutton loveth his belly, * Phil. 3. 19. and the gratifications of the appetite, yet he doth not trust in his belly cheer, he thinketh not to be protected by it, and therefore though he rob God of *his love*, yet he doth not as the covetous, rob God of *his trust*; we are all apt to make such an Idol of the creature: poor men if they had wealth, this were enough to make them happy, and therefore they trust in those which have it, which is Idolatriy upon Idolatriy: whence 'tis said, *Psal. 62. 9. Men of low degree are vanity, and men of high degree are lies*; to appearance men of *low degree* are nothing; but men of *high degree* are wont to be trusted in, and therefore *lie*, because by a righteous judgement of God they disappoint our trust: but chiefly, is this secret Idolatriy incident to *the rich*; though they do not pray to their wealth, or offer sacrifice, but use it as familiarly as any other thing, yet if it intercept their trust, they are guilty of Idolatriy; many that smile at the vanity of the *Gentiles* that worshipped stocks and stones and Idols of gold and silver, do worse themselves, though more spiritually, whilst they build their *happiness* and security upon their *estates*, it may be they do not say to their riches, *ye shall deliver me*, or to their gold *thou art my confidence*: they do not use such *gross language*; for covetous men may speak as basely of wealth as another man: they may say I know 'tis but *refined Earth*, &c. but their hearts make it their *only refuge* and *stay*, and their *inward thoughts* are that they and their children cannot be happy without it, which is a great sin, a setting up another God; for by this means is their heart withdrawn from the true God to the world, and kept from good works, lest they part with that which is the *staff* and *stay* of their lives.

3. When we do not observe his Providence ; the blind world sets up an Idol called *Chance*, and doth not acknowledge God at the other end of Causes, as swaying all things by his wisdom and Power. 1. *In afflictions*, they think they come by *chance* and *ill luck*, 1 Sam. 6. 9. and Isa 26. 11. As if instruments and second causes did all, and the Lord were an *Idle spectator and looker on*, and had no hand in all that befallerth us: Job better, *The Lord giveth, the Lord taketh*, he doth not look only to the *Chaldean, the Sabeau, the Thief, but the Lord*: in all afflictions we should look beyond the creature, and not complain of *ill fortune*, and *chance*, or *stars*, or *constellations*, or any thing on this side God. 2. *In mercies*, 'tis ungodliness when we do not see God in all our mercies: wicked men receive blessings, and never look up, they live upon God every moment; they have *life and breath, and motion*, and hourly maintenance from him, and yet God is not in all their things: as swine ravine upon the acorns, and never look to the Oak from whence they fall; so they look no higher then the next hand; but Gods children may be compared to *Chickens that sip and look up, wards*: The Lord complaineth of Israel, *Hos. 2. 8. She did not know that I gave her Corn, and Wine, and Oyle, and Silver and gold*; there cannot be a greater sign of an ungodly spirit then this *unthankful profaneness*; this is that which God expecteth from reasonable creatures, by way of *homage*, that we should own him as *Author of all the good* which we enjoy, other creatures live upon God, but they are not capable of knowing the first cause, as we are; Idolatry and Atheism had never crept into the world, if men had considered who it was that gave them *fruitfull seasons and showers of rain, and filled their hearts with food and gladness*, Acts, 14. 16, 17. And surely nothing sedeth piety, and maintaineth a constant awe of God, so much as thinking of God every time we eat and drink, and enjoy any new mercy from him: but alas, usually we forget God, when he remembreth us most; he is never so much dishonoured as in eating and drinking, and in the plentiful enjoyment of outward comforts.

4. Another part of ungodliness is, when we do not acknowledge his Dominion over all events, sanctifying the things we use and *use and make*, by asking his leave and blessing. 'Tis robbery to use goods

goods without the owners leave, so to use any creature, food, or physick without *sanctifying it by the Word and Prayer*, that ^{1 Tim 4. 3-5} is, knowing our liberty and right from the Word of promise, and asking Gods leave and blessing in prayer, or to go about any business or journey, or fixing our abode without inquiring at the Oracle, all this is ungodliness; 'tis our duty still to consult with God, *Ye ought to say, if the Lord will, &c. Jam. 4. 15.* 'Tis a piece of religious manners, we forget to bid our selves *God speed*, when we do not acknowledge the dominion of God in all these cases, *Prov. 3. 5. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.* Gods children dare not resolve upon any course till they have first consulted with God.

Secondly, God will be acknowledged as the *chiefest good*, and so we are guilty of ungodliness.

1. *If we do not often think of him*; if we did not want hearts we cannot want objects to put us in mind of God; *in manus v. he is not far from every one of us, Acts 17. 27.* But though God be not far from us, yet we are far from God; he that is every where is seldom found in our hearts: We are not so near to our selves, as God is near to us; who can keep his breath in his body for a minute, if God were not there? He is *with* him us, and round about us, in the effects of his power and goodness, but we are at too great a distance from him in our mind and affections: How many trifles occupy our minds? but the Lord can seldom find any room there, *God is not in all their thoughts, Psal. 10. 3.* Yea when thoughts of God rush into our minds, they are like *unwelcome guests*, we wish to be rid of them; wicked men abhor their own thoughts of God, because the more they think of God, the more they tremble, as the devils do; therefore the Apostle saith, *They like not to retain God in their knowledge, Rom. 1.* This is far from the temper of Gods child *r. n.* David saith, *Psal. 104. 34. My meditation of him shall be sweet.* 'Tis the spiritual feast and entertainment of a gracious soul to think of God: none desire with our thoughts more than he, and we cannot put them to better use: He thought of us before the world was, and still *great is the multitude of his thoughts to us ward*; therefore 'tis vile ingratitude not to think of him again: when we hate a person, we cannot endure to look upon him, and the hatred of the mind is shew'd by the *aversion, and turning away of the thoughts.*

2. *If*

2. *If we do not delight in communion with him, we do not honour him as the chiefest good.* Friends love to be often in one anothers company, and certainly 'tis good to draw nigh to God; to preserve an acquaintance between him and us: he hath appointed his Ordinances, the *Word* and *Prayer*, which are as it were a *Dialogue* and *interchangeable discourse* between God and the Creature; in the *Word* he speaketh to us, and in *Prayer* we speak unto him; he *conveith his* mind in the *Word*, and we *ask his* grace in *Prayer*; in *Prayer* we make the *request*, and in the *Word* we have *Gods Answer*. Well then, when men neglect *publick* or *private Prayer*, or *opportunities of hearing*, they are guilty of *ungodlines*; so far they break off communion with God, especially if they neglect *Prayer*, which is a duty to be done at all times; a sweet diversion which the soul enjoyeth with God in private, a duty which answereth to the *daily sacrifice*; therefore the *neglect of Prayer* is made to be a branch of *Atheism*, *Psal.* 14. 3. 4. verses. When men are loth to come into Gods presence out of a love to ease and carnal pleasures, and care not if God and they grow strange, or seldom hear from one another, 'tis a great evil: our *comfort* and *peace* dependeth much upon *frequent access* to God: so when *family-worship*, when that's neglected, God is not honoured as the *chiefest good*; the heathens are described to be the *families that call not on Gods Name*, *Jer.* 10. 25. In many places from one end of the week to the other, there is no *Prayer* and *Worship* in the *Family*; and so the *house* which should be made a *Church* is made a *Stye*: not a swine about their houses but is attended morning and evening, and yet they can finde no time for the solemn invocation of the Name of God; what are they better than Heathens?

3. *If we do not fear to offend him.* God will be served with every affection; *Love* is of use in the spiritual life, and so is *fear*, 2 *Cor.* 7. 1. *Perfecting holiness in the fear of God.* *Love* sweetneth duties, and *Fear* maketh us watchful against sin: * *Love* is the *doing Grace*, and *Fear* is * the *conserving Grace*. We have cause to walk in *Gods ways*, because we are always under his eye. *Love* is necessary, that we may keep God always in our hearts; and *Fear*, that we may keep him always in our eye: both of them are of great use; but *Fear* we now speak of, which is the true internal root of all obedience and worship, *Ecc.* 12. 13. when

* Gal. 5. 6.

* Jer. 32. 40.

when there is such a settled disposition of heart, as that we dare not grieve him, nor affront him to his face (as *Ahasuerus* said, *Will he force the Queen before my face?*) God is much honoured; but now when we are secure and careless, and forget God, and can sin freely in thought, and softly in act, without remorse, 'tis ungodliness. Fear is a Grace of continual use: we cannot be always praising God, worshipping God, and employed in acts of special communion with him, yet we must be always fearing God; be thou in the fear of God all the day long, *Prov.* 23. 17. and elsewhere, *Blessed is he that feareth always*, *Prov.* 28. 14. A man hath done with his devotion in the morning, but he hath not done with God; we should think of him, and remember that his eye is upon us all the day long: we must rise in the fear of God, walk in the fear of God, trade, eat, drink in the fear of God. Some Graces are as the Lungs, never out of use and exercise. *Jude* 12. More especially must fear be active when temptations and corruptions arise, we must argue as *Joseph*, *Gen.* 39. 9.

4. If we do not care to please him: An ungodly man thinketh of nothing less than pleasing God, he neither careth to know his ways, nor to walk in them, they are willingly ignorant, *2 Pet.* 3. 5. They do not search, that they may not practice, and so erre not in mind, but in heart: We desire not the knowledge of thy ways, *Job* 21. 13. They have not a * mind to know that which they have not a mind to do, as those that would sleep shut the Curtains to keep out the light. A godly man is always approving what is the will of God, *Rom.* 12. 2. *Ephes.* 5. 10. 17. he practiseth what he knoweth, and is still searching, that he may know more, as willing always to be more useful for God: What have I to do more?

* Nolentes audire quod Audirent dammare non possunt &c. Text. in Apol.

Thirdly: God will be acknowledged as the supreme Truth and Authority; and then if we are not moved with Promises, Threats, Counsels, as with the words of the great God, if we do not yield him reverence in his worship, and subject our hearts and lives to his Laws, 'tis ungodliness.

1. We must receive the counsels of his Word with all regard and reverence; for that is to receive it as the Word of God, *2 Thes.* 2. 10. Heathens received the Oracles of their gods, and were much moved; we can drowsily hear of the great things of salvation, of heaven, and the death of Christ, &c, and are not moved,

no more moved than with a *Fable* or *Dream*. If a man should make another an offer of a *thousand pound* for a *trifle*, and he should not *accept* of it, you would not say 'twas because he *prized the trifle more*, that's improbable; but because he did not *believe* the offer: So when God offereth Heaven upon such terms as he doth, we do not honour him as the *eternal truth*, but count him a *lyar*, 1 *John* 5. 10. or else we would not neglect the offer.

2. We must yield him *reverence in his worship*: God is said, *Psal.* 68. to be *terrible in the holy places*; he is not only terrible in the *high places* of the field, where he executeth his dreadful judgments, nor in the *depths of the Sea*, where the wonders of the Lord are seen, but terrible in the *holy places*, where his Ordinances are dispensed, because there his *holiness*, which is the astonishing Attribute, is most seen and remembered. We do not come to him as the *supream Majesty*, when we do not come with awful apprehensions; God is dreadful there where he is most comfortable, *Deut.* 28. 58. *That thou mayst fear this glorious and fearful Name, the Lord thy God*: To have God for our God is the ground of all our comfort and hope, and yet 'tis a glorious and fearful Name: In *Mal.* 1. 14. the Lord urgeth two arguments why we should worship him with reverence; one is, *I am a great King*, saith the Lord of Hosts; the other is, *My Name is dreadful among the heathen*, implying in the first, that *careless* and *rude addresses* to him are a kind of a lessening his Majesty; they do not come to him as a *great King*, and do, as much as in them lyeth, go about to persuade the world that he is not the God that he is taken to be, so great, so terrible, and glorious. The next argument is taken from his respect among the heathens that know him by *common providence*; they that have but a glimpse of his glory, that know least of his glory, yet know enough to fear him, and reverence him: Therefore take heed of serving him in a loose and perfunctory manner; you dishonour God exceedingly else, even then when you come to give honour to him.

3. *There must be a willing subjection of our hearts and lives to his Laws*. It must be a subjection of the heart; Gods Authority is never more undermined than by a meer *form of Godliness*, 2 *Tim.* 3. 5. 'Tis the greatest ungodliness that can be, for you

you rob the Lord of his *Dominion* over the conscience; *Hypocrisie* is a *practical Blasphemy*, I know the blasphemy of them, &c. Rev. 2. 9: *The life* also must be subject to God, by a *conformity* to his *Laws*: Men hate God as a *Law-giver*, they love him as a *giver of Blessings*: 'Tis the disposition of all, that they would live at large, and have no God to call them to an account; thoughts that strike at the *Being of God*, and *Doctrine of liberty* are welcome to a carnal heart; 'tis pleasing to think if there were no God, to hear that there is no *Law*, no suggestions are more catching: The life must be conformed to Gods *Laws*, for he will be honoured in our conversations, as well as have his throne set up in the consciences: 'Tis the glory of a Commander to be obeyed; I say to one go and he goeth, and to another come and he cometh: God looketh for glory from you in this kind, he will have all the world know that his servants are at his beck, that he hath called you to his foot, Isa. 41. 2. the righteous man from the East, he called him to his foot; that is, to go to and fro at his command, if he say go they go, if he saith come they come; these are the people framed for his praise: he can bid them do nothing, but they are ready to do it with the loss of all.

4. God will be honoured as the *utmost end*; and so if in all acts, *natural, moral, spiritual*, if we do not aym at his glory, we are guilty of ungodliness: In acts *natural*, and matters of the least consequence, we must have a *supernatural aim*, 1 Cor. 10. 31. *Whether ye eat or drink, or whatsoever you do, do all to the glory of God.* If I take a meal, I must have an aym at Gods glory in it; in *civil acts*, and * duties of mutual commerce, all must be done *as in and to the Lord*, Eph. 5. 22. Eph 6. 1. 5, 6, 7. We are to walk in our relations so as God may have the honour: In *spiritual acts* of *Prayer, Praise, and Worship*, yea the whole ordination of the spiritual life must be *unto God*; I live unto God, Gal. 2. 20. All the motions and tendencies of the soul look that way: This is the difference between *Holiness* and *Godliness*: *Holiness* more properly implieth a conformity to the Law, and *Godliness* an aim of the soul to exalt God, and so they are propounded as distinct, 2 Pet. 3. 11. *What manner of persons ought we to be in all holiness and godliness of conversation?* Well then, look to your aims, in eating and drinking you set up *Molech*; 'tis a *Mear-offering*, and *Drink-offering* to appetite, if you do not aim at Gods

* Virtutes
vitia non offi-
citis distin-
guuntur, sed
finibus.

Phil. 3. 19.
Act. 6. 24.

glory: So in Traffique, if you meerly regard Wealth, you are a consecrated Priest to *Mammon*: In these ordinary actions of *Eating, Drinking, Trading*, you may be guilty of Idolatry before you are aware, and may set up * *the belly*, or * *Mammon* in Gods stead; nay in your very desires of Grace your ultimate aim must not be self; *We are accepted in the beloved to the praise of his glorious grace*, Eph. 1. 6. And in actions most sacred 'tis dangerous to look a-quint, 'tis to put dung in Gods own cup, when we make Worship a tale to our own ends. In short, the Lord hath given many things to the creature; that only which he hath reserved to himself is *his glory*, therefore he taketh it ill to be robbed of that.

Thus I have shewed you the several kinds of ungodliness, some are more refined, some more gross, but all naughty. The worst sort is, when we do *contemptuously* sleight his providence, and disobey his Laws, hardening our selves yet more and more, as *Abaz* did, though the Lord had exercised him with sharp afflictions, and living in *open irreligion* and despight of God, casting off yoke after yoke, till at length we have *out-grown the heart of a man*, fearing neither God nor men.

2/s.

Well then, if we would not be counted ungodly, let us take heed of all these sins:

1. How else will ye look God in the face at the day of Judgement; *The ungodly shall not stand in judgement*, Phil. 1. 5. That is, so as to be able to plead their cause, and lift up the head, though they shall rise again and receive their sentence; therefore ill rendered by the vulgar, *non resurgenti*, yet they shall have *no boldness*, but hang their guilty heads for shame in that day; the day of judgement is appointed on purpose to take vengeance of ungodly persons, see *Jude* 15. 'Tis the day wherein God that is now withdrawn within the Curtain of the Heavens, cometh forth to manifest himself to the terror of all ungodly ones.

2. There are great judgments inflicted upon them in this world; the Flood swept away the world of the ungodly, 2 Pet. 2. 7. and 1 Pet. 4. 18. *Where shall the sinner and the ungodly appear?* The Lords jealousy for his honour is very great, and therefore none shall smart so sorely as the ungodly person: 'Tis said, *1/s. 57. 17. He putteth on jealousy as a cloak*; the cloak is mans upper garment, which is most visible; there is nothing so visible in

in Gods Providence as his jealousy for his honour; there is no sin robs God of his honour, so much as ungodliness; so 'tis said *Exod. 34. 14. That jealousy is his name*: the name of a thing is the note of distinction, by which it is known and differenced from all other things either of the same or another kind; so Gods jealousy against those that rob him of his Honour distinguisheth him from all the gods of the world; the gods of the Heathens were good-fellow-gods, and could endure Rivals and Copartners; but this the Lord doth severely punish; none have fallen under the weight of his vengeance so much as they that deny their respects to him, and go on whoring after another God.

3. 'Tis the great aym of the Gospel to prevent ungodliness, by discovering more of God than was known before, and by finding out a way how the Notions of God might be kept inviolable, and how we might come to the enjoyment of God; and yet God suffer no loss of Honour: therefore the Gospel is called the *Mystery of godliness*, 1 Tim. 3. 16. and a *Doctrine according to godliness*, 1 Tim. 6. 3. men might be ungodly at a cheaper rate then now they can in these dayes of the Gospel: now we have more means to know God, and more obligations to respect God: more clear and certain notions of his excellency and glory.

4. Ungodliness is the root of all irregular courses: Abraham was afraid of himself in Gerar: Why? The fear of God is not in this place, Gen. 20. 11. Godliness is the great bulwark of Laws and all honest discipline; subjects are not afraid of Princes, nor Princes of subjects, where the fear of God prevaileth: there can be no true honesty without piety: the first part of the Law provideth for respects to God, as being the proper foundation of the second, which containeth respects to our neighbour: often it cometh to pass by Gods just judgment, that spiritual wickedness is punished with civil: See *Hos. 4. 12. 23.* and where men are not tender of Gods Interests, they do also inroach upon civil rights and freedoms. Means and Directions are these.

1. Purge the heart from principles of ungodliness: there are many gross Maxims ingrafted in mans heart; as, that 'tis folly to be precise, that it was better when there was less knowledge; that 'tis in vain to serve God, that thoughts are free; if we carry it fair

before men, we need trouble our selves no further : when men do their best, petty sins are not to be stood upon : that Religion is but a notion and fancy ; the Gospel a golden dream, &c. That such principles are within us, appeareth by the *foolishness of our practices*, and course of living ; for *actions are the best Image of our thoughts*, and these are purged away by waiting upon the word, which discovereth them, *Heb. 4. 12.* and layeth in good principles, *Psal. 119. 9.* by which means they are destroyed. 2. Suppress all ungodly thoughts as soon as they do arise, as, *that there is no God*, *Psal. 14. 8.* Shame may lay a restraint upon the tongue, but the heart is ever casting up such a thought as this is : So that God is not so harsh, but we may take a little liberty in sinning ; see *Psal. 50. 21.* or that he taketh no notice of what we speak or do ; he cannot see through the dark clouds, *Job 22. 12, 13.* When any such thoughts rush into the mind, check them, and actually rebuke them, lest they sett e into a rooted Atheism. 3. Mortifie vile affections : the judgment is tainted by the contagion of lusts, as a foul stomach sendeth up fumes and gross vapours into the head ; and so the principles of godliness do quickly suffer an Eclipse ; The pure in heart see mist of God, *Mat. 5. 9.* In fenny Countries the Ay is seldom cleer ; so in hearts that lye under the power of brutish lusts, there are seldom clear and distinct thoughts of God. Keep close to Gods institutions, these keep up his presence and memorial in the world, and so are the best preservative of godliness ; false worships are full of ceremonies, which darken the Nature of God, Images beget a gross opinion of God : no wonder if people grow blockish, that worship God in a senseless block or stone. Varro in Austin observed, that those that first invented Images did but increase error, and take away all fear of Religion. God knoweth what is best for himself, and how by his own Institutions to keep up the repute of his Nature and Essence : when man presumeth to be wiser then God, and leaveth the certainty of Gods Institutions for additions and innovations of their own, that please them better, because they have *Abysse of wisdom*, a shew of wisdom, *Col. 2. 23, 23:* all Religion goeth to wrack. 5. Let us often exercise our selves unto godliness, *1 Tim. 4. 7.* delight to give to God the Honour due to him ; Love, Delight, Fear, to worship him often, to do all things as ayming at his glory.

The next Clause in the description of these seducers is, *That, [Turning the grace of our God into wantonness:]* where you may take notice. 1. Of their *Filthiness* and *brutish course* of life, implied in the word [*wantonness*], in the Original, *ἀσέλγεια*, a word proper to *luxury*, and the *impurities of lust*, it is derived from *Alpha*, an augmentative particle, and *Selga*, the name of a Town in *Pisidia* (saith *Suidas*) whose Inhabitants were infamous for *Sodomy*, and weakning Nature by such *prodigious filthiness* as is not fit to be named among Saints: and the persons here noted, the *school of Simon*, The *Nicholaitans*, the *Gnosticks*, and other *impure Hereticks* of that age, were for *promiscuous commixtures*, and the *free use of their fellow creatures* (as some carnal wretches in our age have learned to speak) without any respect to *conjugal relation*, and those restraints which God and Nature, and all *civil Nations* have laid upon the lusts of man, as if men should use no more *distinction and confinement* then the *beasts*, yea gave up themselves to all manner of *unnatural lust*, as in the process of this Epistle we shall more fully discover. 2. The *occasion and incouragement* of this *wantonness*, which doubleth the iniquity of it, and is [*The grace of God*] by which is meant the *gospel*, which is call'd the *grace of God*, as *Tit. 2. 11.* the *grace of God hath appeared unto us, teaching us, &c.* and in the Gospel, chiefly, they abused the Doctrine of *Christian liberty*, and *free justification by Christ*, this is primarily intended; you may by analogy enlarge the expression to comprise all those *other Doctrines* which *Libertines* are apt to a use; yea those *gracious providences* which wicked men do convert into fuel and nourishment for their sins. 3. The *manner* how so excellent a thing as the *grace of God*, is made pliable to so *vile a purpose*: for a man would wonder that things at so great and infinite a distance as the *grace of God* and *filthy lusts*, should ever be brought to cast an aspect upon one another; that is shewed in the word [*turning*] in the Original *παρατρέφεις* *wresting*, transferring from its proper use. They offered violence to the *Doctrine of grace*, that it might be conscious to such a *monstrous birth and production*, as *filthy lusts* and *carnal pleasures*. 4. You have an hint of the reason why the Apostle writeth against them with such a zealous indignation, in that word [*Our*] as if he had said, that *grace* whose *sweetness* we have tasted, whose *power* we have

have felt; of *that God*, who hath been *so kinde* to us in *Christ*, whose *glory* we are bound to promote; shall we see *our God*, and *that grace* upon which all our hopes stand, to be abused to such an *unclen use*?

From the words thus opened, I Observe. 1. *That the Gospel and grace of God in its self is not pliable to carnal purposes, yieldeth no carnal conclusions*, [They turn it] saith the Apostle, there is no such thing gotten out of the Gospel without wresting, and till the Art of a deceiver hath past upon it. I shall prove the point by three Arguments.

1. Reason.

1. From the *constitution of the Gospel*, it yieldeth no leave to *sin*, but *liberty to serve God*: this is the great design of it, *Christ* came not to reconcile *God* and our *sins* together, but *God* and our *persons*; to reconcile our *persons*, and destroy our *sins*; not to free us from the *Law*, but *sin*; to free us from the *service of the Devil*, 1 *John* 3. 8. not from the *service of God*: In short, he came not to make the *Law* less strict, or *sin* less odious, or us less holy; for the perfection of the *Law* was never so clearly known, as since the coming of *Christ*, See *Mat.* 5. and *sin* was never so odious, as since the abundance of *grace*; they under the *Law* sinned at a cheaper rate than we can, because they did not sin against so much love and kindness, See *Heb.* 2. 2, 3. neither could *Christ* come to make us less holy, or to displace with our care of holiness; for then he should come to deface the Image of *God*, and make us more unlike *God*, which would not be a privilege, but a burden to the new creature; freedom from wrath and Hell is a privilege; but freedom from duty and obedience is no privilege: in the Gospel there is pardon for failings, but not to encourage us in our failings, but our duties: We were never so much obliged to duty as since the Gospel, because now we have more help and more advantages, stronger motives and greater encouragements: If we look backward, we are bound in point of gratitude to serve the Lord, being redeemed hereunto by the blood of *Jesus*; if we look forward, we are encouraged by the hopes of eternal life; the *Law* could not persuade by such Arguments as the Gospel doth; there is more of the Rule known, more of the Spirit poured out, to give us help to observe it; so that from this short abridgement of larger discourses, it appeareth, that the great design of the Gospel is to make us more like

God

God, and to free us from the slavery of the Devil, that we may be better servants and subjects to God.

2 There are frequent and constant dissuaves from this perverting our liberty in Christ to the service of any fleshly desire: The Spirit of God foresaw how corrupt nature in us would tempt us to abuse our priviledges to an evil purpose; yea many had already attempted it in the Apostles dayes, as the sect of the *Nicholaitans*, the school of *Simon*, and after them the *Gnosticks*, and *Basiliidians*, who under colour of Evangelical liberty, gave up themselves to lawless and brutish practices (as before was hinted) therefore by way of prevention, dissuaves are very frequent every where, as *Rom. 6. 1. What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid: As if he had said, you will not want such corrupt teachers: may your hearts will be marvellous apt to frame such kind of consequences and conclusions; but reject them with indignation. So Gal. 5. 13. You are called to liberty, only use not your liberty as an occasion to the flesh. Christ hath done his part, purchased glorious priviledges for you; only take you heed that you do not abuse them, your base hearts are apt enough: so 1 *Pet. 2. 16. As free, but not using your liberty as a cloak of maliciousness.* Freedom by Christ will be an unfit cover and pretence for so vile a practice:*

3. *Because in the Gospel its self there are quite contrary inferences and conclusions from those which flesh and blood would draw from the Gospel:* As to instance; in any thing wherein the Gospel hath been abused, to three ends hath it been abused, to Loosness, Laziness, Licentiousness. Now you shall see the Word carrieth things in a quite contrary way to what carnal men do: to Loosness; men have been the more loose and careless, because grace hath abounded in the discoveries of the Gospel; but the Apostle disdaineth it as a most abhorrent and strange Conclusion from the Gospel-principles, *Rom 6. 1. Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? God forbid. Men who do not cherish such a vile and unworthy thought; the Gospel teacheth quite contrary, see Titus 2. 11, 12. not wantonness, but weakness to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts.* So see *Rom. 6. 16, and 2 Cor. 7. 1. A Bee gathereth honey thence from whence a Spider sucketh poyson.* Again, to Laziness: men are apt to lye

lye down upon the bed of ease, and say *Christ* must do all, and so exclude all use of means, and the endeavour of the creature: This is a soul abuse; for the Scripture inferreth thence the care and work of the creature, because *God doth all*, *Phil. 2. 12, 13. Work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for 'tis God worketh in you both to will and to do.* We must the more humbly wait upon God in the use of Ordinances, because all dependeth upon his assistance. Again, to *Licentious men*; have interpreted freedom by *Christ* in such a perverse sence, as to cast off obedience to civil powers, either to *Masters* in the Family, or to *Magistrates* in the Common-wealth; whereas the Word calleth for these duties upon this very ground, because *we are made free by Christ*, that is, more ready and apt to discharge the duty we ow to God and man; in this sence 'tis said, *1 Cor. 7. 22. That a servant is the Lords freeman*; and *1 Pet. 2. 16. Obey Governours as free, but as servants of the Lord*; Christianity giveth us a greater aptness, layeth on us a greater engagement, the bond of conscience; so that there is, as *Salvian* speaketh, *in maxima libertate minima licentia*, a great deal of liberty by *Christ*, and yet the strongest engagement to service that may be.

Let us now apply the point.

It serveth to inform us in the first place, that carnal men are ill skilled in consequences; from the very Gospel would they draw a liberty to sin, than which from such premises no conclusion can be more strange; 'tis well worth the observing, to note the different arguings in Scripture from the same Principles; as see some instances, compare *1 Cor. 7. 29.* with *1 Cor. 15. 22.* the Principle in both places, is, *the time is short*; Now the Apostle in the former place draweth from it conclusions of *strictness, temperance, and mortification*; *Let us use the World as if we used it not*, &c. But in the latter, the dissolute *Epicure* argueth quite otherwise, *Let us eat and drink, for to morrow we shall dye*, a quite different conclusion from the same Principle; So here, grace aboundeth, let us be much in duty, saith the spiritual man; let sin abound saith the carnal. Again, compare *2 Sam. 7. 2.* with *Hag. 1. 2* *I dwell within a house of Cedar* (saith *Davia*) *but the Ark of God dwelleth within curtains.* Surely I should have had more care of the Ark of God, now God hath built me such a stately Palace; But they in *Haggai*, *We dwell in sieled houses,*

houses, therefore the time to build the Lords house is not come; so they might live in pomp and ease, they little cared how matters went with Gods house. Once more, 1 Sam. 3. 18. *It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good:* he argueth from thence to meekness, and a submissive patience; but now compare 2 Kings 6. 33. *This evil is from the Lord, why should I wait upon him any longer?* from the same principle he argueth himself into a murmuring, and fit of impatience. Thus carnal men are always out in their reasonings: *A Parable in a fools mouth (saith Solomon) is like a thorn in the hand of a drunkard:* When the spirits are disturbed by excess of drink, men have not an even touch; and so when they would use a thorn, or any sharp thing, they wound and gore themselves; so do wicked men, being besotted with lusts, argue falsely from the Grace and holy principles of the word, to their own destruction. Prov. 26. 9.

Again, it serveth for *Caution*; when you meet with such *base inferences* from Evangelical principles, do not blame the Gospel, or the Ministry and dispensation of the Gospel. Use 2.

1. Not the Gospel, as if it were not clear enough, or faithful enough, or wary enough; such thoughts are wont to haunt us when we see gross errors creeping under a shelter and pretence of Scripture; foolish men would give Laws to Heaven; we think God should speak more plainly; as if the Lord should make a sun for them to see that shut their eyes: vain man will stumble in Gods plainest ways; should things be never so clearly carried, a perverse apprehension would make them obscure; *Parables* (which are the liveliest and most sensible representations of things) hardened the Pharisees, *Mark* 4. 11, 12. If men ruine themselves by their own false Logick we should not therefore accuse God: they that have a mind to fall shall not want a stone of stumbling; they that will only be feasted with comforts, no wonder if they contract a spiritual sickness, and undo their souls by a misunderstood, and misapplied Gospel.

2. Do not blame the Ministry, and dispensation of the Gospel, because some abuse Free grace, others cannot endure to hear it preached; but children must not be kept from their bread, because Doggs catch at it; because some are drunk with wine, and others eat to excess, shall the hungry man want his food? Shall hungry consciences lose their portion for others abuse? No, no,

if carnal men serve their lusts of these truths, we cannot help it, we are not in the place of God; we can only deliver the Doctrine, we cannot give them gracious hearts to improve it. The Papists will not let the people have the Scriptures upon this reason, for fear of abuses; and Gardiner would not have this gap of free Grace opened to the people, &c. The Devil hath ever malign'd a Gospel dispensation: Let not us withhold the truth for fear of inconvenience: Let us look to our commission, preach the Gospel to every creature; if men abuse it we are clear, their destruction is just, as the Apostle speaketh to this very case, *Rom. 3. 8.* Some slanderously report that we say, let us do evil that good may come thereof, whose damnation is just: some gave out that Paul taught that they might sin freely, that God might have the more glory in pardoning, their damnation is just; if they went away with such a vile conceit (saith he) they learned it not from me. *Musculus* complaineth in one of his books, that no place was so prophane and irreligious as those where the Gospel had been preached; and * *Comizen* a Jesuit, citing this passage, cryeth out, See the fruit of Protestantism, and their Gospel preaching; many are of his spirit, and do even hate the publication of the doctrine of Grace, as if this were the cause of mens miscarriage: If men abuse the truth we cannot help it; however, visible mistakes must be prevented, lest men go away with a Scorpion instead of Fish, and a stone instead of Bread.

* *Adamus*
Contigenius in
Mat. cap. 24.

Observat. 2.

2. The next point, That though Grace its self be not pliable to such conclusions, yet wicked men are very apt to abuse it to the countenancing and cherishing of their sins and lusts. You see here the abuse of the Doctrine of the Gospel was very ancient, this spirit of Errour wrought betimes: the former days were no better then these, *Eccles. 7. 10.* In the Apostles days, vile hearts did abuse good Doctrine; Men were the same then which they are now: when such kind of Errours have a second spring and revolution, indeed of all Errours these seem to be very natural; we greedily drink in the poyson of carnal liberty; but let me give you the reasons why ungodly men take liberty and occasion from the Grace of God, to serve their sinful lusts and pleasures.

Reasons.

1. Because carnal hearts do assimilate all that they meet with, and turn it into the nourishment of their carnal lusts; as the salt sea turneth the fresh Rivers, and the sweet Showres of Heaven
into

into salt waters ; so do carnal men pervert the *holy principles of the Gospel*; or as sweet Liquours are soon sowed in an unclean vessel, so do truths lose their use and efficacy, when laid up in a carnal heart, and are quite turned to another purpose.

2. *Because they would fain sin securely, & cum privilegio*, with a free dispensation from God, and therefore seek by all means to entitle God to the sin, and the sin to God ; they would find a great deal of ease from gripes of conscience, if they could make God the *Autor*, or at least the *countenancer*, of their evil practices ; and therefore when they *rub their guilt upon the Gospel*, and pretend a liberty by Christ, the design is accomplished. *Augustine* often taketh notice, that the Heathens took the more liberty to sin, because their gods were represented as *approvers* and *countenancers* of such kind of actions ; if men could once make God an *approver of sin*, and giving leave to satisfy their desires, the design of carnal nature were at an end, and they would be freed of that awe of a divine power which is *only left in nature* as the check and restraint of sin ; and therefore because God hath revealed so much of his *indulgence* to the *fain creature* in the Gospel, they strive to draw all the passages of it that way, as if God had given leave to sin freely.

3. Because man is obedient naturally no longer than when under impressions of awe and fear ; the ** cords of a man* work little with us ; like beasts, we only put forward when we feel the Goad : *Violent means* do more than *gentle persuasions*, and the sweet strains of *Grace*. Usually where we are dealt with in that kind, we ** wax wanton, and kick with the heel* ; as an *Ass-colt* ** Deut. 32. 15.* being suckled and full, kicks her dam in the fore-head.

4. *Because we all naturally desire liberty, carnal liberty*, to be left to our own sway and bent, and therefore we catch at any thing that tendeth that way ; we would be *as Gods*, Lords of our own actions, and so are very apt to dream of an exemption from all kind of *Law* but our own *lusts* ; the *Seducers bait* was a *promise of liberty*, 2 *Pet. 2. 19.* We would all be above check and controll, and have scope and room for our lusts, *Psal. 12. 4.* *Our lips are our own, who is Lord over us ?* We would fain bring it to that, to be at our own dispose ; to be answerable to none that should call us to an account : The tumult of the Nation against Christ was about *bonds and yokes*, *Psal. 2. 3.* The

pale or the yoke is grievous to us, see Job 11. 12. Jer. 31. 18. Now being so resolved to be free, we are willing to *hear of liberty*, and apt to abuse whatsoever sounds to that purpose.

But now let us see how many ways *the grace of God may be turned into wantonness*; a right knowledge of the evil may be a means to prevent it.

There is a Grace dispensed in the way of Gods providence, which may be called *the Grace of God*, and is very liable to abuse; a word of that before I come to the main thing here intended: Thus we find the *patience of God* often abused; when the Lord keepeth silence in Heaven, and doth not presently thunder down vengeance on the heads of sinners; we wallow in ease and fleshly delights, and dream of a perpetual happiness, and think we shall do as well as the precisest of them all; Eccles. 8. 11. *Because vengeance is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of men is set in them to do evil*: Thus doth mans venomous nature suck poyson out of so sweet an Attribute as Gods patience: And as Gods patience is abused, so is also his goodness and Bountie. When we are full and enjoy plenty, we grow wanton, and either despise our mercies, Mal. 1. 2. *Wherein hast thou loved us?* or, which is worse, despise God himself; *turn back upon the Mercy-seat*; grow very negligent, cold and careless, in the Worship of God: nay, many times the mind is efferrated, and grown brutish and insolent, both towards God and man, Hos. 13. 6. *According to their Pasture so were they filled; they were filled and their heart was exalted, they have forgotten me*. Men have large Pastures, and strong lusts, and then God is forgotten; there is not that care of God, that sense of duty, that meekness of spirit; this is growing wanton with Gods goodness. Once more, there is another Grace of Providence which is apt to be abused; and that is, *the vouchsafement of Ordinances*, or the means of Grace in great plenty; a Mercy prized when it first cometh among a people, but within a little while they grow wanton, 1 Sam. 3. 11. *The Word of God was precious in those days, for there was no open vision*: whilst Visions are scarce they are highly prized; but when they are open and publick, men begin to grow giddy, cannot be contented with the simplicity of Gods Ordinances, but must be fed with ungrounded subtilties, and quintessential extracts; when spiritual appetite groweth wanton,

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Psal. 36. 1.
Zeph. 1. 12.

it is an ill sign, when *plain truths* will not down, and all things must be carried in an *airie, subtil, and notional way*, God will have a *scurge* for such a wanton people.

But let us come closer to the matter in hand; This Text speaketh of *Doftrinal discoveries* of grace, of the abuse of the *Gospel*, and the *principles* thereof: now *were an hard task* to give you an account of all the *paralogisms* and *corrupt inferences*, which men draw from the *Gospel*; there is no *Doftrine*, but one way or another, a *carnal heart* is apt to abuse it: the most usual abuses are these:

1. The *Doftrine of Election* is abused, men say they may live as they list: *If God hath elected them, they shall be saved*; and so allow themselves in their careless neglect of the means of salvation: be not deceived, God that decreeth the end, decreeth the means: God hath predestinated us to be conformed to the *Image of his Son*, *Rom. 8. 29.* in grace here, as well as in glory hereafter.

2. The *Doftrine of the Attributes of Gods mercy* and *long-suffering*. Men will say they are sinners, and so are others, but God is *merciful*; and so poor ignorant drunkards, Adulterers; and swearers as they are, they dye with this Principle in their mouths, *God is merciful: but be not deceived, neither Fornicators nor Adulterers, &c. shall enter into the Kingdom of God, 1 Cor. 6. 9.* So *Ephes. 5. 6.* Let no man deceive you with vain words for because of these things cometh the wrath of God. Both these places shew there were divers which had such deceitful thoughts, as if living and dying drunkards, Adulterers, &c. they should go to Heaven: others abuse the *long suffering* of God to their delaying and putting off their repentance, as if after a *long vicious life* provided they could be *devout at the last gasp*, they should at length be saved; and of a *fuddain* from *Swine* become *Saints*: as many delayed their Baptism heretofore, because they would have longer time to sin in, and to walk after their own lusts, and when they were warned of their *licitious course*; their answer was, *Tunc demum à peccatis desistam cum baptizatus ero*; When I am baptized I will live otherwise: Thou fool, besides the uncertainty of thy having time or grace to repent; this is a manifest abuse of Gods patience, and will turn to thy greater ruine, *Romans 2. 4, 5.*

3. The

3. *The Doctrine of Gospel-grace is abused many ways. Sometimes to exclude the fear and reverence of God, as if fear were an antiquated grace suiting only with a legal dispensation: where as the children of God think the more grace, the more fear, Psal. 130. 4. There is mercy with thee, therefore thou shouldst be feared, and Hof. 3 5. They shall fear the Lord and his goodness: the goodness of God doth not make them presumptuous; but is the greater matter of reverence and holy trembling: fear is so far from being abolished in the Gospel, that it continueth in Heaven, it being an essential and necessary respect from the Creature to the Creator. Again, 'tis abused to deny all humiliation and sorrow for sins, yea all confession of sins; as if to be humbled for sins were legal, whereas repentance, and all the acts of it, is a meer Gospel duty, the Law knew no such thing, and the truest and most genuine sorrow ariseth from a sense of pardon, Zek. 12. 10. They shall look upon him whom they have pierced, and mourn. So Luk. 7. 47. that Christian Niobe loved much, and wept much, and all because much was forgiven; John speaketh so believers, to them that walked in the light, so confess their sins, 1 John 1. 9. we cannot have pardon in Gods way till this be done: if we confess, &c. 'tis a condition not for which, but without which pardon is not obtained; it doth not shew the cause, but the order of graces working: again, sometimes 'tis abused to the neglecting of circumspection and heed in us: we are preserved in Christ (say they) and therefore we may be careless; and though we cast our selves upon snares, temptations and occasions to sin, be confident that God will keep us; the Devil sets upon Christ with such a temptation, Mat. 4. 6. Cast thy self down, and he shall give his Angels charge over thee. Libertines scoff at the niceness and scrupulousness of former professors, that were willing to keep at such a distance from a temptation, as if their strict and exact walking were a fruit of their darkness and legal spiritedness: whereas the Apostle maketh it a main property of children of Light, thus to do, Ephes. 5. 15. So Gods doing all in the Covenant of Grace is abused to exclude all care of duty: and to keep men in a lazy ascitancy, and gaping for grace without all care or endeavour on our part: whereas God loveth to be met with in his own way, and cometh in with supplies of grace, according to our diligence in the use of means:*

See

See *Mark* 4. 34. and as 'tis abused to shut out all endeavours after grace; so all *actings* and *operations* under grace: as if we were meer logs rather than *rational Agents*, and God so did all, that the *act* of our own faculties were quite abolished, or suspended: whereas though the grace be from God, yet the *act* is ours, for otherwise the faintness and defectiveness of the Operation would be chargeable upon him, and the Lord doth so draw us, that we have a motion of our own; draw me and we will run after thee, *Cant.* 1. 4. 'Tis he that treads down Satan, but under our feet, *Rom.* 16. 20. the Doctrine of *Christian liberty*, which is one part of the Gospel, is abused to exclude the Moral Law, as a rule of duties to God and Man: whereas the Apostle saith, I am not *ayou* but *ayou*, not without the Law to God, but under the Law to Christ, *1 Cor.* 9. 20. Sometimes 'tis abused to a living to the height of the Creature, (as to ne carnal wretches phraiseit) or an immoderate use of carnal comforts: whereas to restrain us in this kind the Scripture forbiddeth *licentiousness* in the use of the creatures under such terms as do imply the lawful use; See *Luk.* 17. 27. and *Isa.* 23. 13. the things mentioned there are necessary for the supportation of life; but the immoderate use is intended, because they did nothing else but mind these things, He that will do all that he may, will soon do more then he should. The Doctrine of *spiritual Worship*, and abolishing the shadows of the Law, which is another part of the Gospel, is abused to the neglect and contempt of Ordinances, and Acts of solemn worship, as if all were but forms, not suiting with that *spirituality* unto which they think they are called in these dayes of the Gospel, and so constant prayer is laid aside as a form, whereas God calleth for dayly worship in this kind, *Matth.* 6. 11. and making Conscience of hearing the Word: a form too low for them that pretend to live immediately upon the Spirit: whereas the Scripture joyneth word and spirit together, as inseparable in the dispensation, *Isai.* 59. 21. and the Apostle in one verse, saith, despise not prophesying, *1 Thes.* 1. 19. and presently vers. 20. Quench not the spirit: implying, whosoever doth the one, will certainly do the other; so the Use of the Seals, Baptism and the Supper, as forms fit for Novices; but they are of a more elevated strain, and above these lower helps, enjoying so much in the inward and hidden man; whereas Christ hath enjoined these

these Ordinances for the use of all sorts of Christians till he come again to judge the world, see *Mat. 28. 20.* and *1 Cor. 11. 26.* so *instructing Children*, a form, though we have express command for it in Scripture, *Eph. 6. 4.* 'twere easie to rake in this puddle, but this talte may suffice.

Use. 1. The Use of all is to make us more cautious and wary, that we may not be guilty of this great sin.

'Tis the error of the wicked, *2 Pet. 3. 16.* 'tis a black mark to grow the more wanton, for mercies; secure for patience; sensual, vain, negligent, careless, because of the free tenders of grace in the Gospel; there cannot be a more evident mark of a man in a carnal condition: 'tis sad when our Table is made a snare; but 'tis worse when the very Gospel is made a snare; for the better things are, the worse is the abuse and more dangerous; look as 'tis a mark of the Love of God to have all things work together for good to us, *Rom. 8. 28.* So 'tis an Argument of the hatred of God, when all things prove a snare, and the very Gospel it self, the blessed Gospel of the glorious God is cursed to us, Oh how sad is their condition!

2. 'Tis a sin against Mercy, and those of all others are most dangerous; when you abuse grace, you make grace your enemy; and 'tis ill for creatures when grace is their enemy, and there is nothing left for them but Justice and Wrath; Justice will take up the quarrel of abused Mercy; and as Grace is despised, so wrath taketh place; they treasure up wrath, &c. *Rom. 2. 4, 5.*

3. 'Tis foul ingratitude to turn our mercies into a provocation, to make a Calf of our Earrings, and to serve our luits of Gods Providence, as he said of Adam, that what he received was a Rib he returned a Dart, alluding to his fall by Eve; so we fight against God with his own weapons, what vile ingratitude is that? See *Jer. 5. 7. Ezek. 7. 10.* To make Plenty the fuel of our luits, what is it but to * make God serve with our sins, and to grow worse for the Gospel, black and tawny, because the Sun of Righteousness hath looked upon us? 'tis as it were to give it out to the World, as if he did serve with our sins by his own consent, and we had a License from Heaven to doe what we do.

4. 'Tis a great grief to the Spirit of God, when you abuse grace,

Grace, you do as it were put your miscarriages upon him, when you call *licentious walking, Christian Liberty*; and neglect of *Duty, Gospel freedom*; and godly sorrow, *Legalism*; and strict walking, *superstitious niceness*; you do as it were Father your *Bastards* upon the Spirit, and intitle the *monstrous conceptions* and births of your own carnal hearts to his *incubation and overshadowing*; you think God warranteth you in all this, and that's a high wrong to him, which he will avenge in due time; see *Psal. 50, 21, 22*: I remember the Prophet saith, *Jer. 4. 10. Oh Lord, thou hast greatly deceived this people*, because the false Prophets had done it in his name; *false doctrines* make God to be the deceiver, and these ill Consequences drawn from the Gospel are in effect charged upon the Spirit who is the Author of it.

Well then, *Learn the Truth, as it is in Jesus, Ephes. 4. 21.*

First, *Make him your Teacher*; flesh and blood will stumble in Gods plained wayes; We cannot learn any Gospel Truth of our selves, but we are apt to pervert it to an ill use.

2^o *Take the whole doctrine together*; for it is the Truth as it is in Jesus, otherwise 'tis the Truth as 'tis in the mouth of a false Teacher; half Truth hath filled the world with looseness, when men divide between Christs comforts, and Christs Graces, his Priesthood and his Regality, his Benefits and his Lawes, these partial apprehensions spoyl all.

3. As to your manner of learning, let it be saving, and such as tends to practice; 'tis not enough to make Christ our Teacher, by using his word, and looking for the direction of his Spirit, and to make the whole Counciel of God our lesson, but also we must learn to a saving purpose to put off the Old man, to put on the New, and not to store the brain with knowledge so much as the heart with grace: for to this end is the Gospel given to us, not for Science so much as practices, to make us better rather then wiser and more knowing.

Another Use is Examination, to put us upon trial, whether we do not, yea, or no, turn the grace of God into wantonness: A man may be right in doctrine, and yet the constitution of his spirit may be naught. Again, there may be a fond doting on the name of Christ, and yet no real respect to him: therefore it behoves us to search how the Gospel works with us.

Use. 2.

1. Are you not the better for the knowledge of it, if you are not the better, you are the worse; if you *know Christ*, and come short of the power of his Grace, you *know him in vain*, you make Christ and the Gospel an *useless thing*, compare 2 Cor. 6. 1, with Col. 1. 6. there is *a receiving the grace of God in vain*, and *a knowing the grace of God in truth*: we receive it in *vain* when we are nothing the better for it; and we receive it in *truth* when we feel the *sweetness and power* of it upon our *hearts and consciences*; those that know the grace in truth are the more *vigilant*; more *humble*, more *holy*, they are more *diligent* for the grace of God hath a *mighty constraint* to urge us to duty, 2 Cor. 5. 14, 15. more *humble*, nothing so *melting* as Grace, Zech. 12. 10. *Unkindness* after so much Grace as we have received in Christ is the great reason and cause of *godly sorrow*: More *holy*, nothing kindles such a *rage and indignation* against sin as Grace doth, Ezra. 9. 14. *Should we again after such a deliverance, &c*: Nothing perswadeth by such *powerful arguments* to the practice of holiness, as grace doth, See Tit. 2. 11. 12, 13, 14. Therefore what are you the better? if it worketh not thus 'tis sad,

2. Are you the worse sensibly for the knowledge of the Gospel?

First, Do you grow more *careless and neglectful* of duties, as if now there were not so much required of you? The Gospel never taught you that, but your own corrupt hearts; 'tis true, the more Christ is preached, the more *Evangelical* a man is in his duties; his heart is taken off more from *resting in them*, he doth not pitch his hopes upon the *sale of number* of his duties, and he doth not perform them *out of bondage*, but more *cheerly, knowingly, comfortably*, as upon Gospel Grounds; but still he will be performing: as knowing that duties can never have *too much of our care*, and *too little of our trust*: in the Gospel we have *more help*, therefore in all reason we should perform *more work*: well then, to grow *more lazy*, and *less frequent* in the worship of God, and the use of the means of grace, the more we are acquainted with Gods grace in Christ, is to abuse grace, which was given to make us *more cheerful*, not more *slack and negligent*.

Secondly, *Less circumspect and wary* in your Conversations,

loose

loose walking is an ill sign: Christ himself taught us, *to enter in at the straight gate, and to walk in the narrow way, Mat. 7. 14.* When men seek more roomth and breadth for their lusts, they pervert the end of the Gospel, for the Gospel only sheweth, *That the greatest sin is pardonable, but the least is not allowable:* the world is much for a *shorter cut to Heaven;* but when you have done all, you will find that the *good, old, long way is the nearest way home;* still we must make *streights steps* to our feet: mortifie lusts, bridle vile affections, and keep close to *Rut:* Sin is the same that ever it was, and the *Law* is the same, and God is as *Holy* and as much *delights in holiness* as ever he did; we therefore must be *as strict as ever;* 'tis but a carnal liberty to have leave to be wanton, to be free to sin: *Nature* is very apt to hear in that ear, See *2 Pet. 2. 18. 19.* but grace counts it no privilege.

Thirdly, *If less humble,* still you are guilty a man committeth sin and findeth no remorse, upon the pretence of Gods free grace in pardoning, this is still the wantonness which ariseth from the abuse of the Gospel; Gods Children never loathe themselves more then upon the remembrance of mercy, *Ezek. 36. 31.* never melted for sin more, then when the warm beams of Gods love thaw their hearts, that they should sin against a pardoning God, a gracious Father: a good Master, &c. every mercy is a new stab at heart, *Christs* look made Peter weep bitterly, nothing affects them so much as grace.

The third point is taken from that Particel [*ΟΝΤ*] τῶν τῶ 3. *Observat.* 3: ὅτι ἡμῶν, he mentioneth their interest in God to provoke them so much the more to zeal, against errors, that were so scandalous to his grace. Note, *That sense of Interest in God begets the best zeal for the truths and glory of God.* The point consists of two Branches.

1. *The Interest in God will beget a zeal for God:* it troubleth a good man to see any one wronged, much more to see his own relation wronged, most of all to see his God wronged; can a man profess love to God, and not espouse his quarrel? Friends have all things common, common love and common hatred, wrong the one, and the other is not well at ease; so it is in the spiritual friendship between us and God, *Psal. 69. 9.* *The reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen upon me:* injuries done

to God and Religion will as neerly affect us, as those done to our persons; certainly they that can be silent in the cause of God have little affection to him, and are so tender of worldly interests, do little value an interest in God: *Wisdom is justified of her children, Mat. 11. 19.* they are Bastards and not Children, that are afraid or ashamed to own their mothers defence, or can hugge those in their bosoms that are enemies to God and his grace, *Psal. 139. 21. Do not I grieved with them that rise up against thee? 'Tis an Argument of his sincerity, that God and he had the same enemies; that he could find no room in his heart for affection to them, that had no affection to God: when we came into covenant with God, we made a League with him offensive and defensive; to count his friends ours, and his enemies ours; to hate what he hateth, and to love what he loveth; therefore without breach of covenant, we cannot be silent in Gods cause, and be friends to the enemies and abusers of his grace.*

2. The next Branch is, *That their zeal who have an interest in God, is the best zeal:* now 'tis the best, partly because 'tis hottest; they that contest meerly for an opinion are not so earnest as they that contend out of affection; as a stranger seeing a man oppressed may chide him that did the wrong; but a near relation, he will interpose and venture himself in the quarrel: So will one that loveth God sacrifice all his interests for Gods sake: partly because 'tis purest; carnal men may ingage in Religious controversies, out of passion they may stickle for their own opinion; but this fire is taken from a Common hearth, not from the Altar; it doth not arise from any love to God, from any inward relish or taste of the sweetness of grace; but only from humour, and obstinacy, and worldly interest; we may as well be afraid of some mens zeal against error, as of others proneness to it: Carnal persons keep a great coyle, and fill the world with clamour and rage, but their hearts do not flame with zeal upon a proper interest, and do not carry on things in Gods way.

The Use is to inform us of the reason why the spirits of godly men are so keen against such errors as intrench upon the grace of God; why errors about Christ are horrible, to them, a very abomination to their thoughts; because thereupon are built all their hopes, and in such matters they have most experience; therefore

fore their hearts sparkle within them; others feel a cold indifference, but they a mighty pressure upon their spirits.

I now come to the last part of their description: [*And denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ*] observe their *sin* [*denying.*] The Object [*the Lord Jesus Christ,*] who is here described three ways. 1. By his *absolute rule and supremacy*, *θεσπότης μόνος, the only Lord* 2. By his *Essence*, *πατήρ, God.* 3. By his *Headship over the Church*, *κύριος ἡμῶν, our Lord Jesus Christ.*

I shall first vindicate, and then open the words; divers take the words *disjunctively*, applying the first clause to the Father: the second to the Son: So *Erasmus* transluteth it: *God who is that only Lord, and our Lord Jesus Christ*: But as *Beza* observeth; this is not the first time that he is taken tripping in those places, which seem manifestly to assert the God-head of Christ; briefly then, that the whole clause is to be understood of Christ, may be proved by these arguments. 1. Because the parallel place in *Peter*, from whence this seemeth to be taken, maketh mention only of *Jesus Christ*, where *θεσπότης*, the word of *absolute Sovereignty* is ascribed to him, [*denying τὸν θεσπότην, the Master that bought them,*] 2 *Pet.* 2. 1. 2. Because to me it seemeth that *Jude* would lay down all the prerogatives of Christ in his natures, as God, as man: In his relation to the world, so a Master; to the Church, so a Lord. 3. By the tenor of the words in the Original, where there is no new Article to divide them; and therefore all these Titles belong to the same person, *τὸν μόνον θεσπότην τὸν πατέρα κύριον ἡμῶν ἀπεύχοντο.* 4. Many old Copies (as *Calvin* saith) read thus; *denying Christ who is only God and only Lord.* 5. Because the heresie of these times struck at *Christ*, more then *God the Father*, and only at the Father for *Christ's* sake; and therefore *John*, in his Epistles, speaketh often of those that *denied Christ*, See 1 *John* 2. 22. and 1 *John* 4. 3. *Ariste* the School of *Simon*, and some other Sects held forth many fabulous things of God, and introduced multitude of Rulers, by whom the world was governed; but this was to exclude Christ, and to make void that Sovereignty which the Scriptures assert to be committed into his hands: The most ancient Heresies were those of the *Simonians*, *Menandrians*, *Saturninians*, who denied the person of Christ; affirming *Simon Magus* to be

be Christ. And the *Valentinians*, who denied his humane Nature, affirming that he brought his substance from Heaven, and only passed through the *Virgin Mary*, like water through a Conduit: there is but one *Objection* against this exposition, and that is, if it be meant of Christ; then the Father will be excluded from being God; for Christ, according to the sense alledged, is said to be *only Master, only God, and only Lord*: I Answer, The expression doth not exclude either of the Persons of the Godhead, *the Father or the Son*; but *only the Creatures and feigned gods*, especially those *feigned Rulers and Governours of the world*, which the School of *Simon*, and the *Nicholaitans* introduced under the horrid names of *Barbel, Abrakan, and Kav-lakan*, &c. and indeed such kind of expressions are frequent in Scripture, as *Isa. 44. 8. Is there a God beside me? yea there is no God, I know not any: So Isa. 45. 5. I am the Lord, there is none else, there is none besides me: All* which expressions are meant of Christ, as appeareth not only by the Titles of *Saviour* and *Redeemer*, given to the God that there speaketh; but also by divers passages therein proper to him; yea by a quotation of the *Apostles*. Compare *Isa. 45. 22, 23.* with *Rom. 14. 11.* and *Phil. 2. 10.* Again, you shall find like passages of God the Father, where he is said to be *only true God*, *Joh. 7. 3. This is life eternal to know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent*; which is not exclusive of other persons, but of other gods; and the Scriptures speak thus, because of the unity of the *Divine Essence*, which all the persons communicate one with another.

The Exposition of the words, now they are vindicated, will be easie: [*And denying*] this is done either *openly* or *coverly*. *Openly*, when Christ is clearly renounced and opposed. *Coverly*, Christ is denied either by the *filthy conversation* of *Christians*; or else by *Heretical insinuations*, striking at his person and natures at a distance, both are intended for these seducers; though they *denied Christ*, yet they had their *pretences* and *illusions*: this Christ whom they denied is described by his relation in the *World* [*the only Master, or Ruler*;] this word is opposed to their dotting conceit of *many Rulers*, between whom the Regiment of the World was divided; the next Title is [*God*;] so Christ is called because of his divine nature; and then [*our Lord*] he

he saith [*our*] partly to shew that this was the Title that he bore in relation to the Church, they being his peculiar people, by his fathers gift and his own purchase; partly to awaken their zeal by a consideration of the interest which they had in this Lord thus denied: and then the other word [*Lord*] is proper to Christs Mediatorship; see 1 Cor. 8. 5. there remaineth but Christs name [*Jesus Christ*]; the word [*Jesus*] is opened *Mat. 1. 21. Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins*; and it implieth here that Christs Lordship shall be administred for the salvation of the Church; the word [*Christ*] signifieth anointed, which noteth his designation from God, to be King, Priest, and Prophet; I do thus particularly open the terms, because I suppose the Apostles scope is to give us a sum of the Christians Doctrine, concerning the Person, Nature and Office of Jesus Christ; all which were one way or other impugned by the seducers of that age.

The points that might be drawn hence are many; for a taste take these.

That Jesus Christ is Master and Lord, βασιλεὺς καὶ κύριος, *Observat. 1.* King of nations, *Ier. 10. 7.* and King of Saints, *Rev. 15. 3.* or as the Apostle in one place, Head over all things to the Church, *Eph. 1. 22.* he is over all things Supream and absolute, but the Churches head, from whom they receive all manner of influence; he hath a rod of Iron to rule the Nations, and a golden Scepter to guide the Church; in the World he ruleth by his Providences, in the Church by his Testimonies, *Psal. 93. per totum.* In the World the attribute manifested is Power; in the Church, grace; we'll then, here is comfort to Gods people; your Lord is the Worlds Master; let the waves roar, the Lord reigneth, *Psal. 93.* You need not fear, he is not only Lord to protect you, but Master of them that rise up against you: Again, who would not chuse him to be a Lord, when, whether we will or no, he is our Master; and bow the knee to him, that will else break the back; and touch his golden Scepter, lest we be broken with his Rod of Iron; and take hold of his strength by faith, lest we feel it in displeasure; Lord let me feel the efficacy of thy grace, rather then the power of thine anger.

Observe

Observat. 2. Observe again, *That Christ is Lord and Jesus*; he came to rule, and he came to save: I shall handle these two Titles.
1. *Conjunctly*, and then, 2. *Singly* and apart.

1. *Conjunctly*, Let all Israel know that God hath made this Jesus whom ye have crucified Lord and Christ, Acts 2. 36. 'Tis usual to observe in Christs stile and Title, a mixture of words of power, and words of goodness and mercy. See *Isai. 9. 6.* & *alibi passim*, now for what end? partly to shew that he is a desirable friend, and a dreadful adversary; partly to set forth the mystery of his person, in whom the two Natures did meet, partly to shew that he is not good out of impotency and weakness; if we pardon and do good 'tis out of need; God is strong enough to revenge, but gracious enough to save and pardon: Power maketh us cruel; Who findeth his enemy and slayeth him not? if we forbear, 'tis out of policy, not out of pity: the sons of Zeruih may be too hard for us, but Christ who is the great Lord, he is also Jesus, he hath the greatest power, and the greatest mercy; mighty, but yet a Saviour: Partly to shew how we should receive him; we should not onely come to him for ease, but take his yoke, *Mat. 11. 28, 29.* Give him your hearts as well as your consciences; if Christ save, let not sin Lord it. What a pitiful thing is it when men would have Christ to redeem them, and Satan to rule and govern them! ἡ δόξα αὐτοῦ βασιλεύσαι, we will not have this man to reign over us, *Luke 19. 14.* There the business sticks; the carnal mind is enmity to the Law, *Rom. 8.* Lusts cannot endure to hear of a restraint, and therefore we oppose most Christs Nomotherick power; like angry Dogs we gnaw the chain: the language of every carnal heart is, our lips are our own, who is Lord over us? *Psal. 12. 4.* To be controuled for every word, every thought, every action, we cannot endure it. Oh consider, Christ hath many enemies, but they are his chief enemies that do withstand his reigning, *Luke 14. 29.* Those mine enemies that would not that I should reign over them, &c.

Secondly, Let us handle these two Titles singly and apart:

1. He is Lord, Acts 10. 36. Jesus Christ he is Lord of all. As he is God he hath the same glory with the Father; as Mediatour there is a dominion that results from his Office; for so he is the heir of all things, the head of all creatures, and King of the Church, and at the last day the Judge of all men. But he is chiefly

chiefly a *Lord* because of his *heritage* in the Church; a *Lord* over his *own people*, who are given to him for a *possession* by God the Father, *Psal.* 2. 8. and bought with his *own blood*, *Acts* 20. 28. and taken into a *Marriage-covenant* with him, *Ephes.* 5. 25, 26, 27. And as *Sarah* called her husband *Lord*, so must the Church owne *Christ* for *Lord* and *Husband*. Well then, let us acknowledge the *dominion* of *Christ*, let him be *Lord alone* in his *own house*; let us yield subjection and obedience to him; let us beware of depriving him of that honour to which he hath so good a right: You will say, who are those that deny *Christ* his *Lordship*? I answer.

1. They that will not hear his voice, that slight his calls; he inviteth them and prayeth them that they will look into their hearts, consider their eternal condition, but they *quench the Spirit*, smother light, resist all these motions; these will not hear *Christ's* voice; he intreateth, prayeth that we will come and put our souls under his Government, and we in effect say, *we are Lords, and will not come at thee*, *Jer.* 2. 31. We are well enough, and shall do well enough without any such care and strictness.

2. They that cannot endure his restraints, *Jer.* 31. 18. *Thou art as a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke*. They cannot endure to hear of denying their fashions, their lusts, their pleasures, their vain thoughts, when every thought, and every desire must be under a Law; so much time spent in duties, such gravity in the conversation, such awe in their speeches, they break off like a wanton heifer; vain and licentious spirits will not be yoked and clogged thus, *Mal.* 1. 14: *What a weariness is it?* Sacrifice upon sacrifice! such waiting upon God! they cannot endure it. Man is compared to a wild *Ass-colt*, not only for grossness of conceit, but for untamedness and wildness, *Job* 11. We would roam abroad without restraint.

3. They that are given up to strong and inordinate desires of liberty; when men quarrel at duties rather than practise them, think it a kind of happiness to be free, and that there is no freedom but in sinning, and following the bent and sway of their own hearts, are all for breaking bands, and dissolving cords, *Psal.* 2. 4.

4. These are bewrayed by a proud contempt, and obstinacy against instruction and reproof, *Jer.* 5. 5. *I will go to the great men and*

Speak to them, but these have altogether burst the yoke, and broken the bands, they had cast off all respect and obedience to God, Jer. 13. 15: Hear, give ear, be not proud, &c. So Heb. 13. 12. Suffer the words of exhortation, &c. Some spirits are impatient and recoil with the more violence upon a reproof, and storm and vex, which argueth much unsubmission of heart to Christ.

Secondly, he is *Jesum*, which signifieth a *Saviour*; now Christ is a Saviour *positively* as well as *privatively*, he giveth us *spiritual blessings*, as well as *freedom from misery*, Joh. 3. 17. *That they should not perish but have everlasting life.* Again, he is a Saviour, not only by way of deliverance, but by way of prevention, he doth not only break the snare, but keep our feet from falling: He is as a *Shepherd* to lead the flock, as well as a *Physician* to heal the diseased: We do not take notice of *preventive mercies*, and yet *prevention* is better than *escape*. Again, he is a Saviour by merit, and by power; for he hath not only to do with God but with *Sathan*; God is to be satisfied, and *Sathan* overcome, and therefore he rescueth us out of the hands of *Sathan*, and redeemeth us out of the hands of Gods Justice. To rescue a condemned *Malefactor*, and take him by force out of the Executioners hands, is not enough, the Judge also must be satisfied, and pass a pardon, or the man is not safe: *Christ hath pulled us out of the power of darkness*, Col. 1. 13. and in him the Father is well pleased, Mat. 3. 17. There needeth also power to work upon our hearts, as well as merit to satisfy God. Before his Exaltation he redeemed us, then he deserved it, and therefore 'tis said, *We have salvation by his death*, 1 Thes. 5. 9. After his exaltation he worketh it, and so we are saved by his life, Rom. 5. 10. So that living and dying he is ours, that living and dying we may be his; we have the power of his Exaltation as well as the merit of his humiliation. Once more, he saveth us not onely for a while, but for ever, and therefore 'tis called an *eternal salvation*, Heb. 5. 9. not onely from temporal misery, but from *hell and damnation*, not onely the body is saved but the soul, and the soul not onely from hell but the fear of hell, Heb. 2. 14. from the fear as well as the hurt, from despair and want of hope, as well as from the misery it self. Yet again, he saveth us not onely from the evils after sin, but the evil of sin, Mat. 1. 21. *He shall save his people from*

from their sins, there is the chiefest part of his salvation. He doth not only save us in part, but saves us to the uttermost, Heb. 7. 25. He giveth us life, and all things necessary to life : Well then,

1. Bless God for *Jesus Christ* ; that he took the care of our salvation into his own hands ; he would not trust an Angel, none was fit for it, *Isa. 59. I looked and there was no Saviour, therefore mine own arm wrought out salvation* ; there are poor creatures like to perish for want of a Saviour ; I will go down and help them ; as *Jonah*, when he saw the tempest, *Cast me into the sea* ; so, when we had raised a tempest, *Cast me in* (saith Christ) *Lo I am come to do thy will.*

2. Get an interest in Christ, *Luke 1. 47: My spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.* Interest is the true ground of comfort and rejoicing ; what must we do to get this interest ? I Answer,

1. *Reject all other Saviours*, Acts 4. 12. *There is salvation in no other* : nothing could save *Noah* and his Family but the *Ark* ; if they had devised *Ships*, they would not hold out against the *deluge* : especially take heed of making Christ of *self*, setting up thy own merit, or thy own power ; the one in effect renounceth his humiliation, the other his exaltation : Christ came to save that which was lost, the sinking Disciples cryed out, *Master save us, we perish.* 'Tis long ere God bringeth us to this ; till you are lost, why should you make choice of a Saviour ; swimming is not a thing that can be practised a shore, or on firm land ; till we are brought into distress we will never look for a Saviour.

2. Be earnest with God for an interest, and for the manifestation of it, *Psal. 35. 3. Say unto my soul, I am thy salvation* : When the Soul hath chosen God, *Lam. 3. 24. The Lord is my portion, saith my soul* ; I'll have no other Saviour ; but I'll desire the Lord to ratifie it by his consent ; *I am thy salvation* : Those that would make use of Christ's salvation in a temporal way, pressed on him, untill the house ro come at him ; so should we force our selves upon him by an holy boldness.

Again, from the words observe, *The Son of God was Christ*, *Observat.* that he might be Lord and Jesus ; anointed of the Father that he might accomplish our salvation. This anointing signifieth two things.

1. The *quality* and *kind* of his Office.
2. The *Authority* upon which it was founded.

First, it noteth the *nature* of his Offices; under the Old Testament three sorts of persons were anointed, *Kings, Priests, and Prophets*; and all these relations doth Christ sustain to the Church. Men that were to be saved lay under a threefold necessity, *ignorance, distance* from God, and *inability* to return to him; suitably Christ is a *Prophet* to shew us our *miser*y; a *Priest* to provide a *remedy*; a *King* to instate us in that *remedy*; therefore according to these three Offices doth the Scripture use words in describing the benefits we have by Christ, *John 14. 6. I am the way, the truth, and the life.* Christ is the way as a *Priest*; for by his *oblation* and *intercession* we have the boldness to come to God; the *truth* as a *Prophet*; the *life* as a *King*; take life either for the royal donatives of Grace or Glory: So *1 Cor. 1. 30. He is made to us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption*: We are ignorant, *foolish* creatures; therefore Christ is made to us *Wisdom* as a *Prophet*; we are guilty creatures, and therefore *righteousness* as a *Priest*; sinful creatures, therefore *sanctification*; miserable creatures, liable to death and hell, therefore *redemption*; and both these as a *King*: 'twas necessary that the way of our salvation should be opened, effected, and applied; therefore did Christ first come from Heaven as a *Prophet*, to preach the Gospel; and then offer up himself through the eternal Spirit as a *Priest*; and last of all seise upon the *Mediatorial Throne*, as *King* of the Church: Well then, if our blindness and ignorance troubleth us, let us make use of Christs *Prophetical Office*, that he may teach us the whole counsel of God: if we are haunted by *troubles*, and the accusations of our own conscience, let us sprinkle our hearts with the blood of our *high Priest*, that they may be pacified; if we have any desire to be granted, let us make use of his *Intercession*; if we be discouraged by our own weakness, and the power of our *spiritual enemies*; let us run for *protection* to our *King*, through whom the *Saints* are more then *Conquerors*.

2. It noteth the *Authority* upon which his Office is founded, he was anointed thereto by God the Father, who in the work of Redemption is represented as the *offended party*, and *supream Judge*; and so 'tis a great comfort to us that Christ is a Media-

tor of Gods chusing : when *Moses* interposed of his own accord, he was refused ; *blot me out of thy book* : no, saith the Lord, *The soul that sinneth, him will I blot out of my Book* : but now *Jesus Christ* took not this honour upon him, but was called of God thereunto ; 'twas the will of the Father : so that when we come to God, though we cannot say *he is mine*, yet we can say, *Lord he is thine* : a Saviour of thy setting up ; thou hast Authorized him, and wilt thou not own thine own way ? &c.

Once more observe, (which indeed is a point that lyeth full in the eye of the Text) *That Jesus Christ, the master of the world, and Lord of the Church, is true God* : For 'tis said here, [*denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ*] It would seem a strange thing that I should go about to prove the *God-head of Christ*, were not *blasphemy* grown so common, and appearing abroad with so bold a forehead ; heretofore it was a *grievous abomination* to the children of God, when such a *thought* rushed into their minds ; but now some promote it as a *settled opinion* : 'tis Satans policy to *loosen a corner stone*, though he cannot wholly pull it out ; he striveth all that he can to make the main Articles of Religion seem *at least questionable* : But Christians, be not shaken in mind ; the foundation of the Lord standeth sure : I confess I should wholly omit such disputes ; in *fundamental Articles*, we should not allow a *scruple* ; Thou shalt not inquire after their gods, *Deut. 12. 30.* But when such conceits are not only *Sathanical injections*, but mens *settled opinions*, 'tis good to establish the heart in such principles as this is : that Christ is God, appeareth by *express Scripture*, where he is called the *true God*, *1 John 5. 20.* The *great God*, *Titus 2. 13.* to shew that he is not a *God Inferiour* to the Father, but *equal in power and glory* ; and that not by *courtesie* and *grant*, but by *Nature*. So he is called the *Mighty God*, the *everlasting Father*, *Isa. 9. 6.* and *God over all*, *Romans 9. 6.* proofs so evident and pregnant, that they need no illustration ; and that he is a God equal to the Father, appeareth also by *express Texts of Scripture*, *Philip. 2. 6.* *He was in the form of God, and thought it no robbery to be equal with God* ; and *Colossians 2. 9.* *In him dwelleth the fulness of the God head bodily* ; the Saints are made *partakers of the Divine nature*,

nature, 2 Pet. 1. 5. but in him the whole God-head dwelt personally, and all this was no usurpation of anothers right; the Jews would have stoned him, because he said God was his Father, making himself equal with God; therefore he meant it not in an ordinary sence; and indeed if he be a God, he is a God by nature, for God will not give his glory to another. Again, God he must needs be, if you consider the work he ought to do: the work of the Mediatour could be dispatched by no inferiour Agent: as Prophet, he was to be greater then all other Prophets and Apostles; for the great Doctor of the Church ought to be Authentick, a Law-giver, from whose Sentence there is no appeal: A Lord in his own house, Heb. 3. 6. one to whom Moses was but a servant, for to him he gave the Law, Heb. 12. 29. One that is to be a Fountain of wisdom to all the Elect, 1 Cor. 1. 30. One that must not only teach, but give eyes to see, and ears to hear, and an heart to learn: consider him as a King, a sinize power cannot break the force of enemies, pour out the Spirit, raise the Dead, bestow grace and glory, and become an original Fountain of life to all the Elect; all these things are proper to God, the glory which he will not give to another: Consider him as a Priest, and there are two Acts, Oblation and Intercession, and still you will find that he must be God; for his Oblation, he must be one that could offer up himself, Heb. 9. 14. and therefore must have so: er over his own life, John 10. 18. to lay it down, and take it up, which no creature hath: And he must offer himself once for all, 2 Cor. 5. 15. the person that suffered was to be infinite, as good and better then all theirs that should have suffered, as they said to David, thou art better then ten thousand of us; and this suffering was to be but once: now the wages of sin are Eternal Death, something there must be to Compensate the Eternity of the punishment, and nothing could counterpoise Eternity, but the Infiniteness and Excellency of Christs Person, as a payment in Gold taketh up less room then a payment in Silver, but the value is as much: 'twas necessary that he should overcome the punishment; for if he were alwayes suffering, we could have no assurance that God were satisfied; and the end was to expiate sin; nothing but an infinite good could remedy so great an evil, the person wronged is Infinite, so is the person suffering; and th:n his death was not onely to be a Ransome, but a Price, not on-
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ly ἀντίστοιχον, but ἀντάλλαγμα; a surety to an ordinary creditor, payeth the debt, and freeth the debtor from Bonds; Christ was to bring us *into grace and favour with God*, and to merit Heaven for us: Now for the other Act of his Priesthood, his *Intercession*; so he was to know our *persons* and our *wants* and *necessities*, as the High-priest had the *names* of the twelve Tribes on his *Breast* and *shoulders*, *Exodus*, 28. 12, 29. and then he is to Negotiate with God in the behalf of all believers, and to dispatch Blessings suitable to their State: And who can doe this but God who knoweth the heart, and tryeth the Reins? In short, to be a fit *Intercessour* for all the *Elect*, he is to know our *needs*, *thoughts*, *sins*, *prayers*, *desires*, *purposes*, and to wait on our business day and night, that wrath may not break out upon us; so that his work, as *Mediator*, sheweth him to be *God*.

Well then we learn hence:

1. That Christ is a proper Object for Faith, Faith is built on God, 1 Pet. 1. 21. and Christ is God, and therefore his merit was sufficient to redeem the Church, who is therefore said to be *purchased by the blood of God*, *Acts* 20. 28. this maketh him able to sanctifie us, and purge us, for his *blood was offered through the eternal Spirit*, *Heb* 9. 14. as God he knoweth our wants; for as to his divine Nature he knoweth all things, and then he hath an humane Nature, that hath had experience of them. *He is able as God*, to give in the supplies of the Spirit; to *save to the uttermost*, *Heb*. 7. 25. God manifested in our flesh, is a *firm Basis* for our *Faith* and *Comfort*.

2. Since he was *God by Nature*, let us observe the love of Christ in *becoming man*; men shew their love to one another when they hang their *Picture* about their neck: what did Christ when he took our *Nature*? to see the *great God*, in the form of a *servant*, or hanging upon the Cross, how wonderful! *God manifested in our flesh* is a mystery fit for the speculation of Angels, 1 Tim. 3. 16. with 1 Pet. 1. 11. it would have seemed a *blasphemy* for us to have thought it; to have desired it: among the *Friars*, they count it a mighty honour done to their Order, If a great Prince when he is weary of the world, cometh among them, and taketh their *habit*, and dyeth in their *habit*: certainly

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tainly, 'tis a mighty honour to Mankind, that Christ took our nature, and dyed in our nature; and that he was *made sinne, made man, made a curse*: Let us desire to be *made partakers of his nature*, as he was of ours, this is our preferment to be *partakers of the Divine Nature*, 2 Pet. 1. 5, as this was his abasement, the *Sun of Righteousness went backward*, there was the Miracle; and let us use our selves more honourably for the time to come, that we may not defile that Nature which the Son of God assumed.

3. 'Tis an invitation, to press us to come to Christ, and by Christ to God: The great work of the Ministers is like that of *Eliizer, Abrahams servant, to seek a match for our Masters sou*; our way to win you, is to tell you what he is, he is *God man in one person*, he is *man* that you may not be afraid of him: *God* that he may be sufficient to do you good; the *Lord of Lords, King of Kings, the Heir of all things*: the Saviour of the world: this is *your beloved, ye daughters of Jerusalem*: He knoweth your wants, is able to supply them, though you are *unworthy*: come, he needeth no portion with you, we can bring nothing to him, he hath enough in himself, as *Esther the poor Virgin* had garments out of the Kings Wardrobe, *Esther 2. 12.* and the perfumes and odors given her on the Kings cost; therefore come to him, 'tis danger to neglect him; see that ye refuse not him that speaketh from Heaven, *Heb. 12. 25.* 'tis God wooeth you, hee'l take with you nothing; he is *al sufficient*, you bringing him nothing but *all-necessity*, he will protect you, maintain you, give you a Dowry as large as heart can wish: Therefore leave not till you come to *I am my Beloveds, and he is mine.*

I come now to the Word implying their guilt, ἀγνόησας, Denying.

5. Observ.

Observe, That it is an horrible Impiety to deny the Lord Jesus: When he would make these Seducers odious, he giveth them this Character. Now Christ is many wayes denied, I shall refer them to two heads, In Opinion and Practice.

1. In Opinion; So Christ is denied when men deny his *Natures or Offices*. 1. His *Natures*; His *Deity or Humanity*. As those ancient and wicked Hereticks *Ebion* and *Cerinthus*; and that's the reason why *John* beginneth his Gospel (which was last written) with a description of his *Godhead*, and is so zealous against

against them in his Epistles; as also *Jude* and *Peter*. *Ebion*, *Cerinthus*, and *Carpocrates*, and others, held he was begotten as others are, by the help of a man. *Manes* held the Son of God to be a part of his Fathers substance. *Saturinus*, *Basilides*, *Coridon*, with others, denied the Humanity of Christ, saying, He only appeared in the shape of a man. *Samosatenus* held God was not otherwise in Christ then in the Prophets. *Enclyches* held there was in Christ but one Nature, which was made up of the commixture of his Flesh with his Divinity, as Water is mixed with Wine. *Nestorius* would give him two Personalities, because he had two Natures. The *Marcionites* affirmed, Christ suffered not really, but in shew. Thus you see how butie the Devil hath been, and alwayes is, about this main Article.

2. His Offices of King, Priest, and Prophet, have been denyed by none, as I remember, but yet often made voyd, and of none effect: *Antichristianism* is perfectly the evacuating of Christs Offices: The Papists set up Head against Head, which is the spirit of *Antichristianism*; They make void his Priestly Office by *Indulgencies*, *Purgatory*, *Doctrine of Merits*: His Propheticall Office by *Doctrines* of men, and *unwritten Traditions*. So *Socinians* make voyd his Priesthood, by denying his satisfaction; and Papists make void the other Act of his Priesthood, by setting up *Mediators* of Intercession, &c.

3. Christ is denyed in Practice; and so 1. By Apostasie, and total Revolt from him; *Matth.* 10. 33. *Whosoever shall deny me before men, &c.* None sin as Apostates doe; for they do as it were after Tryal, and upon deliberate judgement, acknowledge the Devil the better Master; they first forsook *Sathan*, and then came to Christ, and they go back again from Christ to *Sathan*; and so do as it were tell the world, that with him is the best service; and therefore it were better they had never known the way of Righteousness, &c. 2 *Pet.* 2. 22. 2. By not professing Christ in evil times, for not to profess, is to deny: see *Matth.* 10. 32, 33. and *Mark* 8. 38. in an age when men prove disloyal in the Duty of the Covenant, called there an *Adulterous generation*: Some are ashamed for fear of disgrace, as well as afraid for fear of danger, to own Christ, and the wayes best pleasing to him, this is to deny him.

3. *Men deny Christ, when they profess him, and walk unworthily and dishonourably to their Profession: Actions are the best Image of mens Thoughts; now their Actions give their Profession the Lye; Titus 1. 16. They profess they know God, and in works they deny him. So 1 Tim. 5. 8. If any provide not for his own House, he hath denied the Faith; that is, done an act incompatible with the Christian Faith, of which he maketh profession, which is Interpretatively, a denying the Faith. For the more clear opening of this, consider these Propositions.*

I. *An empty profession of Christ is not enough, Now Christ is every where received, 'tis ease to profess his Name. To be a Christian in heart and conscience was far more ease to them in the Primitive times, then be so in Name and Profession, the Powers of the world being against that way: whereas the difficulty on our part lyeth on being Christians in heart; 'tis no disgrace now to be a Christian outwardly; that opposition and scorn which was then cast upon Christianity, would now be cast upon Judaism, or Turcism, or Paganism: The winds blow out of another Corner, and that which was their discouragement, may be our Motive, to wit, The Countenance of Civil Powers; all advantages lye this way.*

John 6. 28.
Gilbert. in
Cant.

If in Christ's time they followed him for the loaves; now they may much more; *Quandequidem panis Christi jam pinguis factus est, (saith Gilbert) tractatur in Conciliis, disceptatur in Judiciis, disputatur in Scholis, Cantatur in Ecclesiis quæstuosus est nomen Christi: The world is well altered since the first flight of Christianity abroad; the Kings, and Princes, and Wise men of the World were then against it, every where was it hooted at as a novel and improbable Doctrine, but since (by long prescription of time) it hath gotten esteem in the world, and is made the public profession of Nations; and Kings and Princes have brought their glory into the Church; now Christ is handled in Councils, disputed of in the Schools, and preached of in the Assemblies; so that the general profession of Christianity is a matter of no thanks: 'Tis ease to be good where there is nothing to draw us to the contrary; and therefore when Christ cometh to judgement, Paganism and loose possession of Christianity shall fare alike for loose Christians are but Pagans under a Christian name; see Jer. 9. 25, 26. The dayes shall come, that I will punish all them*

them that are uncircumcised, with them that are circumcised; Egypt, and Judah, and Edom, and the children of Ammon, and Moab; for these Nations are uncircumcised in flesh, and the house of Israel are uncircumcised in heart: 'Tis no advantage to bear Gods mark in our Bodies, and to have no fruit of it in our Souls; This is but to cloath our selves with the leaves of the Vine, without partaking the sap. What difference is there between those who in a loose Christian profession are addicted to Luxury, wantonness, quarrelling, prodigious luits, and the Votaries, or Worshippers of Mars, Venus, Bacchus, and Priapus? Only the one appear in their own colours, and shew what they are; and the other, though they are as low and brutish in their practises, pretend to a higher Name, even to the sacred and excellent name of Christians: Alas! your Circumcision shall be reckoned Uncircumcision, when you have not the fruit of it. Rem. 2. 25.

2. Profession of Christianity without answerable practise maketh us in worse case than an Heathen, that is ignorant of Christ, and salvation by him: See 1 Tim. 5. 8. He is worse then an Infidel. Poor Pagans are not so well enlightned, instructed, and acquainted with such rich and glorious mercy, with the great things of Eternity; with the assistances of God the Spirit; they have not such Rules as we have, nor such Advantages as we have, nor such Obligations as we have, nor such Encouragements as we have: If a man on Horseback cometh slower then a man on Foot, we blame him the more, because he had more help: So are Carnal Christians in worse case than the Heathen, because God may justly expect more from them. To be brought up in a Princes Court, and to be still of rude and servile conditions, is worse in them then in those that follow the Plough all the days of their lives: So to be trained up in the Courts of Christ, and to come short of the Heathens in Morality and strictness of conversation; 'twill be worse taken of us, then of those that never heard of Christ: The more we profess the Truth, the more we condemn our selves in our evil practises, and therefore must needs be worse then Heathens; for we practise that by voluntary choice, and perverse inclination, which they practise by education, they know little better: So that the more excellent the Religion is which we profess, the more vile and base is our disobedience; for our profession will be a sore witness against us;

that we knew better, and had encouragements to do better; we *justify the Heathen*, but we *condemn our selves*; as Israel justified Sodom, Ezech. 16. 51. but by her *profession* so much the more disproved her own carriage; see *vers. 63.* time will come when you will wish *you had never known the way of righteousness*; and as Job cursed the day of his Birth, so will you the memory of that day wherein you were added to the Church.

3. *Profession accompanied with some rash and fond affection to Christ is not enough to acquit us from denying him*: Many in an heat and humour will be ready to die for their God, and yet deny him ordinarily in their lives; as a quarrelling Russian will stand up for the honour of his Father, who yet by his debauched courses is the very grief of his heart; it may be he wisheth his death to enjoy the Inheritance, yet if any other should speak a disgraceful word of him, he is up in Arms presently, and ready to fight with him: So some men pretend much affection to their Religion, and are ready to stab him that shall question it, or to venture their own lives in the quarrel; and yet none do this Religion so great a despite and dishonour as they do themselves, by their *ungodly conversations*: The Apostle supposeth that some may give their Bodies to be burned, that have not Charity, 1 Cor. 13. 1. for all this ado is not for their Religion, but their humour: If their Religion were rightly understood, they would not endure it, because it altogether disproveth such practises as they delight in; and all that they do is no more then they would do for an Idol, if they were born there where Idols are worshipped. The Blasphemies of a Pagan, or an open Enemy to Religion, do not touch Christ so near in point of honour, as the scandalous behaviour of a Christian: when Pagans declaim against him, 'tis but the malice of the enemy; Doggs will bark, 'tis their kind; but your disobedience to his Laws, and unsuitable carriages, doth far more dishonour and represent him as an *ulcerous Christ* to the world, because you pretend so much affection to him, and can live in such a fashion; you would be taken for his greatest friends; and so in effect you make the world believe that he doth approve your Doings.

4. *Christ may be denied, though there be a stricter profession of his Name, and some faint love and relish of his sweetness.* Besides the

the loose National Profession of Christianity, which God in a wise Providence ordaineth for the greater safety and preservation of his Church; there may be a strict personal profession, taken up from inward conviction, and some taste and feeling, and yet Christ may be denied for all this; as some that had tasted the good Word, turned aside to the world, and so are said to crucify him, rather then to profess him, Heb. 6. 4, 5, 6. The Apostle intendeth some Hebrews that did mix Moses with Christ, and Judaism with Christianity, to save their goods: So elsewhere he speaketh of some, that had a form of godliness, but denied the power thereof, 2 Tim. 3. 5. By the Form, meaning the strictest garb of Religion then in fashion; this is to deny Christ, when we deny the Virtue and Power of that Religion which he hath established, and will not suffer it to enter upon our hearts.

5. The means to discover false Profession is, to observe how we take it up, and how we carry it on; whether we embrace it upon undue grounds, or match it with unconsistant practices.

1. We embrace it upon undue grounds, if we take it up merely upon Tradition, without a sight of that distinct worth and excellency which is in our Religion; for then our Religion is but an happy mistake; the stumbling of blind zeal upon a good object; and all the difference between you and Pagans, is but the advantage of your Birth and Education; standing upon a higher ground doth not make a man taller then another of the same growth and stature that standeth lower; their stature is the same, though their standing be not the same: So you are no better then Pagans, only you have the advantage of being born within the pale, and in such a Country where the Christian Religion is professed. You do according to the Trade of Israel, 1 Chron 17 4. and live *kal' aiwra*, as the fashion of your Country will carry it; Eph. 2. 3. and as Beasts follow the Track, so you take up that Religion which is entailed upon you.

2. If we match it with unsuitable practices. These may be known, if we do consider what is most excellent in the Christian Religion. Elsewhere I have shewed that the glory of the Christian Religion lyeth in three things; In excellency of Rewards; and purity of Precepts; and sureness of Principles, ^{to page 149.} of Trust.

1. In the *Fulness of the Reward*, which is the eternal enjoyment of God in Christ; therefore they that do not make it their first and chief care, to seek the Kingdom of God, and his righteousness, Matth. 6. 33. that are like Swine, in preferring the *swill of carnal pleasures* before communion with God, or in the Scripture expression, *love pleasures more than God*, or prefer the profits of the world before everlasting happiness; they whose lives are full of *Epicurism, Atheism, Worldliness*, 'tis not a pin to choose whether they be Pagans or Christians; for acting thus heathenishly, thus brutishly, they do but pollute that Sacred and Worthy Name.

2. The *perfection of the Precepts*, which require a full conformity of the whole man to the Will of God; More particularly Christian precepts are remarkable for Purity and Charity: for Purity, and therefore revellings, and banquettings, and chambering, are made to be customs of the Gentiles; 1 Pet. 4. 3. things abhorrent from the Christian Religion; they that are *yokeless*, and live according to the swinge of their own lusts, or else that only fashion the outward man, make no conscience of thoughts, lusts, &c. they do not live as Christians: for Charity, nothing is more pressed than giving; 'twas Christs maxime, *It is better to give than to receive*, Acts 20. 35. and also forgiving; one great strain of his Sermon is *Love to enemies*, Matth. 5. 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48. Christ when he brought from heaven the discovery of such a strange love from God to man, would setle a wonderful love on earth between man and man.

3. For *sureness of Principles of Trust*, the whole Scripture aimeth at this, to settle a trust in God, and therefore it discovereth so much of Gods mercy, of his particular providence, of the contrivance of salvation in and by Christ; so that to be without hope, is to be like a Gentile; for they are described to be *men without hope*, 1 Thes. 4. 13. and *carking and distrustful care* is made the sin of the Gentiles, Matth. 6. 31, 32. this kind of solicitude is for them that know not God, or deny his providence over particular things.

Well then, Take heed of denying Christ, 'tis an heavy sin, it cost Peter bitter sorrow, Matth. 26. 75. Will you deny Christ that brought you? 2 Pet. 2. 2. Now they deny Christ, whose hopes and comforts are only in this world; Christ is not their God, but their

Therefore a
merciless dis-
position is made
in denying the
Faith.
1 Tim. 5. 8.

their Belly, Phil. 3. 19. *Libertines* are not Disciples of Christ, but *Votaries of Priapus*. *Merciless* and *vengeful* men do condemn that Religion which they do profess: in short, they do not only deny Christ that question his *Natures*, or make void his Offices, but they that despise his *Laws*, when they do not walk answerably, or walk contrary.

VERSE 5. *I will therefore put you in remembrance, though ye once knew this; how that the Lord having saved the People out of the Land of Egypt, afterwards destroyed them that believed not.*

WE have done with the *Preface*, I come now to the examples by which the Apostle proveth the danger of defection from the Faith; the first is taken from the *mur-muring Israelites*; the second from the *Apostate Angels*; the third from the *bestly Sodomites*. That you may see how apposite and apt for the Apostles purpose these instances are, I shall first insist upon some *general Observations*.

First Observe, *That Gods ancient Judgements were ordained to Observ. 1.*
be our warnings and examples. The Bible is nothing but a *Book of Presidents*, wherein the Lord would give the world a Document or Copy of his Providence; *All these things are hapned to them for examples: 1 Cor. 10. 11.* When we blow off the dust from these *old experiences*, we may read much of the counsel of God in them; their destruction should be our caution: His *Justice* is the same that ever it was, and his *Power* is the same, his vigour is not abated with years, *God is but one, Gal. 3. 20.* that is, always the same, without change and variation, as ready to take vengeance of the Transgressors of the Law as of old; for that's the point there discussed: So *2 Tim. 2. 13. He abideth faithful, he cannot deny himself:* In all the changes of the World God is not changed, but is where he was at first: Surely we should tremble more when we consider the examples of those that have felt his Justice; for God keepeth a proportion in all his dispensations: If he were *strict*, and *holy*, and *just* then, he is *strict*, and *holy*, and *just* now. He that struck *Ananias*,
and

and Sapphira dead in the place for a *lye*, that made *Zachary* dumb for *unbelief*, that kept *Moses* out of the land of Promise for a few *unadvised words*, that turned *Lot's wife* into a Pillar of Salt for looking back, is the same God still, not a jot altered; His judgements may be more *spiritual*, but still *terrible*.

Again, *Answerable practices* make us partakers of their *guilt*, and therefore involve us in their *punishment*: *Imitation* is an evidence of *approbation*; A man may have more sins charged upon him then those committed in his own person; you are partakers of their evil deeds that lived before you, if you do as they did; it may be the memory of those that formerly fell under the weight of Gods displeasure is execrable to you, yet your walking in the same course is a signe that you like their practices, and therefore you must expect *their judgements with advantage and usury*, *Matth. 23. 35.* *That upon you may come all the righteous blood that was shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel, to the blood of Zechariah the son of Barachiah, whom ye slew between the Temple and the Altar.* Why upon them? And how did they slay him? No doubt the memory of *Cain* was accursed among the Jews, but they walked in the way of *Cain*, and so were to receive *Cain's* judgement with advantage; No doubt the memory of the murderers of *Zechariah* the Prophet was hateful to them, but they continued *Prophet-killing*, and *Prophet-hating*; and therefore did implicitly approve his murder, and so are said to slay him: *Jude 11:* 'tis said, *These perished in the gainsaying of Korah.* How can that be, when they were not as yet born? These Seducers lived long after, but following them in their sin, in their ruine they had a sure pledge of their own destruction: when we see others fall into a deep pit, and yet will adventure the same way, as we sin the worse, so our judgements will be the greater.

Uses.

Well then, Let us make every instance of the Word a *warning*, and apply it for our life; 'tis excellent when we read the Scriptures with a *Spirit of Application* in the miscarriage of others, we have experience at a *cheap rate*, and in their misery we have as *sure a proof* of the evil of sin, though not as *costly*, as if we had felt it our selves.

Again, When wicked men flourish, be not dismayed: How hath

hath God judged sinners of like kind? What say your Scripture presidents? *I went into the Sanctuary, there I understood their end*, Psal. 73. 17.

Again, it sheweth how vain their conceit is, that God will not deal so severely with us, if we continue in our sins, as he hath done with others in former times, when the Scriptures were written; Gods judgments (I confess) are more spiritual, but every way as severe to them that continue in their sins; heretofore they were smitten with *death*, now with *deadness*: *Nadab and Abihu* were quickly dispatched for their unhallowed approaches to God in worship; many come now that do not sanctifie God in their hearts: their judgment is more spiritual, the Ordinances which should quicken, harden them: Bears devoured the children that mocked the Prophet; many sit taunting by the walls that are not torn in pieces by Bears, but they are posting to hell apace; tarry but a little while, and God will *tear them in pieces*, and there shall be none to deliver, Psal. 50. *Korah, Dathan, and Abiram* were swallowed up quick; the *earth cleaves* to receive them that made a cleft in the Congregation: Many act as tumultuously as they, and no doubt their day is coming: *Lot's wife* whose heart hankred after her possessions, was turned into a pillar of Salt for looking back: Gen. 19. They that revert, and after they are embarked with Christ run ashore again, as soon as they see a storm a coming, shall have their reward in due time.

The next thing which I observe in these instances is, the *impartiality of Divine Justice*, for in all the examples brought, there are some circumstances upon which others would expect an exemption from wrath, as the *interest of the Israelites*, they were Gods own people; the *dignity of the Angels*, they were as it were *fellows of God*, and *Couriers of Heaven*: the *beauty and excellency of the countrey of Sodom*: and in all the instances ye may observe the judgements fell on *multitudes and societies*, or *collective Bodies*: *All the murmuring Israelites*, *All the Apostate Angels*, *All the Inhabitants of the four Cities*. Observe then, *That no outward Priviledge can avail us in the day of wrath*, and so 1. *Gods justice knoweth no relations*; He spared not Christ, Rom. 8. 32. He spared not the Angels, 2 Pet. 2. 5. He spared not his people of Israel, &c. 2. *None*

have a priviledge to sin, and therefore none are exempted from punishment; the Law includeth all, the Son, the *Servant*, them that sit on the Throne, and those that grinde at the Mill; none have a license from Heaven, and a priviledge to sin above others. 3. *Wicked men do not spare God, and therefore God doth not spare them*; They abuse his Justice, his Mercy; they spare not his glory, his Laws; and as they are impartial in sinning, no restraints withhold them; so God is impartial in punishing.

Uses.

Lean not then upon these reeds; when wrath maketh inquisition for sinners, outward priviledges are of no use; 'tis happy for them alone that are found in Christ, Phil. 3. The Avenger of blood had nothing to do with the man slayer in the City of Refuge; when God is about to strike, none but Christ can latch the blow: See the vanity of other things; 1. *Outward Profession* is nothing, your *Circumcision* becometh *uncircumcision*; God disclaimeth interest in a sinful people; *Thy people which thou hast brought out of the land of Egypt* (saith God to Moses) when they had corrupted themselves, *Exod. 32. 7.* in scorn and disdain. *Thy people, he will not own them for his Sheep, Deut. 32. 5.* 2. *No dignity* can exempt us; the *Angels were cast down to places of darkness*. Dignity doth not lessen, but aggravate sin; where much is given, much is owed, and much will be required. *Tophet is prepared for Kings, for Princes is it prepared.* 3. *Not outward excellency*, as the pleasant Land of Sodom: The Disciples thought the goodly buildings of the Temple would move Christ to pity, *Luke 21. 5, 6.* but Christ telleth them, *not one stone should be left upon another: Saul was checked for sparing the best*; Justice is not dized with outward splendor. The Lord threatneth to punish the dainty Daughters of Sion with a scab, *Isa. 3. 17. &c.* 4. *Not any society or multitudes of men*; He spared not the o'd world, *2 Pet. 2. 5.* No leagues and combinations can maintain your cause against God, *though the wicked go hand in hand, they shall not scape unpunished*, *Prov. 11. 21.* Briars and Thorns may be intricated, and infolded one within another, but when a devouring flame cometh amongst them, they do not hinder, but increase the burning. Universal evils are above mans punishment, but not Gods; there is no safety in following a multitude to do evil. So that nothing will serve as a

for screen to interpose between wrath and you, but onely Christ.

Thirdly, I observe, That in all these Instances there was *some preceding mercy*, more or less: The *Angels* had the *dignity of their Name*; The *Israelites* had the *Testimony of Gods presence*, and were *delivered out of Egypt*; The *Sodomites* had *External Blessings*, and the *Preaching of Lot*, Gen. 19. 9, *It's Gods usual course to give a people a taste of his mercy, ere he discover the power of his anger*: Judgment is his last work; there is some mercy abused before it cometh, which doth abundantly clear God in the judgments that come upon the sons of men: Their ruine may be sad, but never *undeserved*; God hath not left himself without a witness; but we are left without excuse.

Observat. 3.

Fourthly, Once more I observe, That in all these Instances God had still a care to put a distinction between the just and the unjust; the race of Israel was not destroyed, but only *them that believed not*: The good Angels were preserved, the bad only fell from their first estate: Sodom perished in the flames, but Lot escaped; when the multitude is to corrupt, that we know not how they shall be punished, and the rest preserved; let us think of these instances, let us refer it to God, *he knoweth*, &c. 2 Pet. 2. 9:

Observat. 4.

I come now to the words; in which you have a *Preface*: and the first instance of Gods judgment, which was on the unbeliving Israelites. In the *Preface* you may take notice of his purpose, [I will put you in remembrance] his insinuation, [though ye once knew this.]

I begin with the first part; his purpose, [I will put you in remembrance,] from thence observe, That it is a great part of a Ministers duty to be a Remembrancer. We are remembrancers in a double sence. 1. From the people to God, to put God in mind of his peoples wants; so 'tis said, Isa. 62. 7. *Ye that are the Lords remembrancers*: Christ is the Churches advocate; but we are the Churches Solicitors, to represent the sad condition of the Church to God. 2. From God to the people; and so we are to put them in mind of the being of God; the riches of his grace; the necessity of obedience; the preciousness of their souls; the many dangers that lye in their way to Hea-

Observat. 5.

ven, &c. These are *standing dishes* at Christs Table: That this is a great part of our Office, appeareth by those places, 1 Tim. 4. 6. *If thou put the Brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good Minister of Jesus Christ: And Paul speaking of his Apostleship, saith, Rom. 15. 15. As one that putteth you in remembrance, through the grace given to me: See 2 Tim. 2. 14. Tit. 3. 1. 2 Pet. 1. 12, 13, 14. 2 Pet. 3. 1.* So there are two Psalms that bear that Title; *A Psalm of David to bring to remembrance, Psal. 38. and Psal. 70.* The great use of Sacraments is, to put us in remembrance of Christ, 1 Cor. 11. 24. Yea, one great employment of the Spirit, is to bring things to our remembrance, Joh 14. 26. all which intimateth, 1. Our forgetfulness and incogitancy. Truths formerly understood are soon forgotten, or not duly considered and kept in the view of conscience. 2. The benefit of a good memory: A bad memory is the cause of all mischief; but a lively remembrance of truths keepeth the mind in a good frame. 3. That however it be with *natural, yet spiritual knowledge is a reminiscence*, or reviving the seeds infused in the New Creation. 4. That a Minister dischargeth his duty, when he teacheth his people things vulgar and already known, as well as those which are rare and less known; if he be but a remembrancer 'tis enough; we are to bring forth things both new and old; we count him a wanton prodigal, that only furnisheth his Table with rarities, neglecting wholesome meats because they are usual. 5. The necessity of a standing Ministry; if not to instruct, yet to keep things in remembrance, because the most necessary truths are few and soon learned; men presently begin to think they know as much as can be taught them, and so neglect Ordinances; whereas one great use of the Ministry, is to keep truths fresh and savory in the thoughts and memory; the Heathens soon lost the knowledge of God, because they were without a publick Monitor, that might keep this knowledge still on foot; the sound of the Trumpet insuseth a new courage; so doth every Sermon beget new affections, though we knew the Truths delivered before: Coals will die without continual blowing; so will graces languish, without often warnings and admonitions.

The next thing in the Preface is the *Insinuation*, [*though ye once knew this.*] That word [*once*] needeth to be explained; his mean-

1 Cor. 15. 2.
Heb. 12. 7.

meaning is not that formerly they had known, but now forgotten it; neither is [once] to be referred to *ὑπομνήσαι*, as if the sense were, *I will once put you in remembrance*, but by [once] is meant *once for all*; that is, ye have certainly and irrecoverably received this as a Truth: This Clause will yield us these Notes.

1. That it is the duty of every Christian to be acquainted with the Scriptures. The Apostle presumeth it of these Christians to whom he wrote: Now this is necessary in regard of our selves, that we may know the solid grounds of our own comfort: every man would look over his Charter, Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think to have Eternal Life, John 5. 39 Particular and distinct Scriptures are a great advantage in temptations; *Sic scriptum est*, is Christ's own Argument against Satan, Matthew 4. No Christians to unsettle in point of Comfort or Opinion, as those that are *unskilful in the Word*; Heb. 5. 14. In regard of others 'tis necessary, that we may discharge our duty to them; *Let the Word dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another*, &c. Col. 3. 16. None but full vessels will run over: Ignorant Christians are barren and sapless in discourse; Private Christians must be full of knowledge, not only to have knowledge enough to bring themselves to Heaven, but to admonish others, see Rom. 15. 14. Well then, do not put off this care to others, as if it were proper only to Scholars, and men of a publick Calling; this is every mans work that hath a soul to be saved, 'tis Popish ignorance to be contented with an *implicit Belief*, you may best trust your own eyes; when the Sun shineth, every man openeth his windows to let it in; we busie our selves in other Books, why not in the Word? *Austyn* was pleased with *Tully's Hortensius*, but he cast it away, because he could not find the Name of Christ there: 'tis the Description of a godly man, *His delight is in the Law of God, and in his Law doth he exercise himself day and night*, Psalm 1. 2. There are the chaste delights of a Child of God, not in *Play-Books* and idle Sonnets; How many sacrilegious hours do men spend in these trifles? Good Books should not keep us from the Scriptures, Water is sweetest in the Fountain: *Luther* professeth that he could wish all his Books forgotten and utterly laid aside, rather than that they should keep men from reading the Scriptures themselves. Christians study the Word more, that

Luth. in Gal.
cap. 19.

that you may have Promises, Doctrines, Examples ready, and more familiar with you ; to be ignorant in a knowing Age, is an Argument of much negligence, *Heb. 5. 14.* Now Religion is made every one's Discourse, Will you alone be a stranger in Israel ? As the *many helps* call upon us to study the Word more, so the *many Errors* which are abroad : all Error cometh from unskilfulness in the Scriptures, *Matth. 22. 29. Te erre not, knowing the Scriptures* ; in the dark a man may soon lose his way.

To cure this mischief, let me press you. 1. To read the Scriptures in your Families, set up this Ordinance among other parts of Worship there, 'tis a Family Exercise, that your children may be trained up in them, *2 Tim. 3. 15.* 'Tis a good Closer Exercise for your own private instruction, none of you is in too high a Form ; the Prophets searched them diligently, *1 Per. 11, 12.*

2. Read them with profit, so as you may understand them, and apply the Doctrine and Examples you meet with there ; Ask thy soul, *Understandest thou what thou read'st ? Acts 8. 30.* or as Paul, *Rom. 8. 31. What shall we say to these things ?* The Scriptures are not to be read for delight, but for Spiritual profit and use:

3. In Cases of Difficulty use all holy means, *Pray to God*, the Spirit is the best Interpreter ; *Pray before, Pray after*, as you do for food ; if God answer not at first, cry for Knowledge, *lift up thy voice for understanding* : Call in the helps which God hath given, many private helps of Commentaries ; but above all, *Despise not Prophecy*. Consult with the Officers and Guides of the Church, *Ephesians, 4. 14 Malachie, 2. 7.*

7. *Observat.* 2. Observe again, *That those Truths which we understand already, they had need be pressed again, and revived upon us*, See *1 John 2. 21.* Our Knowledge is but weak, the eye of the mind is opened by degrees ; our Memories are weak, and commands must be repeated to a forgetful Servant ; our Affections are slow, not easily wrought up to the love of good things. When the Wedge will not enter with one blow ; we follow it home with blow upon blow : Well then we say :

1. *Repetitions are lawful*, for you : 'tis a sure thing, *Ph. 3. 1.* Christ

in the Gospels, and *Paul* in the Epistles, do often repeat the same passages; Till you be affected with them, we must inculcate necessary Principles again and again: God speaketh *once, yea twice*, when men regard it *no*, Job 33. 14. Consider men are dull to conceive, slow of heart to believe: The way to pierce the hard stone, is by often dropping: apt to forget heavenly Truths: Leaky Vessels must be filled again, *Heb.* 2. 1. We must repeat, to make *shame more stirring*. Peter was troubled when Christ said the third time, *Lovest thou me*, John 21. 17. Let this which hath been said prevent censure; look upon it as a providence, when the same Truth or Sermon is presented again; Surely I have not meditated enough of this truth, I am not enough affected with it; therefore the Lord hath again brought it to my thoughts, or there is some new temptation that I shall meet with, that I may find the need of this old Truth, &c.

2. That it is a spiritual disease, a *Sau fait of Manna*, when men must still be fed with new things; no truths are too plain for our mouths, or too stale for your ears; the itch of novelty puts men upon ungrounded subtilties, and that maketh way for error and hardness of heart; though you hear nothing but what you are acquainted with, be content, they were carnal people that complained they had nothing but the old *Burthen*, Jer. 23. 33, 34. Take heed of the *Athenian itch*, many times it argueth guilt: we cannot endure to have an old *fore* rubbed again; as Peter was troubled when Christ spake to him the third time (as I noted before) that his *Assurance* should once more be revived.

3. It may justify two duties of great use; *Meditation*, and *Repetition in our Families*. Meditation, for 'tis good to remember Truths that we do already know. *Once God hath spoken, and twice have I heard it*, Psalm 62. 11. we should go over and over it again in our thoughts: First we learn, and then we meditate; Study findeth out a truth, and Meditation improveth it; as first the meat is taken in, and then the digestion is afterward: Conscience preacheth over the Sermon again to the heart; while the thing is new, it doth more exercise Study than Meditation; but when we have once learned it, then our thoughts should work upon it; for Meditation is the improvement of a known truth.

truth. 2. *Repetition in our Families*, let them hear it again and again, the third blow may make the nail go: If people were humble and sober, they would have new and fresh thoughts every time a truth is revived upon them: at first hearing many things are lost through the wandring and distraction of our thoughts, which upon the review may be brought to hand again; at least youth and children must have *line upon line*; as when they learn to write, the same Letters and the same Copy are written over again and again, till the figure of them be formed in their fancies.

I have done with the Preface, I come now to the first instance produced [*How that the Lord having saved the people out of the Land of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not*] *οὐκ ἔχον*. the term is of an honourable use in this place [*the people*] for the peculiar people of God, the holy and elect Nation, that had the Law and the Covenants of Promise; this people after they were *delivered*, and that by so great and solemn a deliverance as that *out of the Land of Egypt*, were afterwards *destroyed*; so that 'tis ill standing upon priviledges: Though many of them to whom the Apostle wrote had renounced *Gentilism*, and were (as it were) come out of *Egypt*, and made Gods people by *visible profession*; yet after all this, they might be *destroyed* in case of *disproportionable practice*, or disobedience to God in that profession. Of Israels destruction, see Num. 14. 37. 1 Cor. 10. 10. *Libertine Christians* shall fare as bad as *obstinate Jews*, that's the drift of his Argument.

Observat. 1.

From this clause observe, That *after great mercies, there do usually follow great judgements, if great sins come between*: As after their deliverance out of *Egypt*, they were *destroyed* for *Unbelief*: This may be proved from Christs advice to the man cured on the Sabbath day, John 5. 14. *Thou art made whole, sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee*. There is the mercy, the duty thence inferred, and the judgement that doth avenge the quarrel of the *abused mercy*: Often it cometh to pass that many mens preservation is but a reservation to a worse thing, to a greater judgment; So see Joshua 24. 20. *He will turn again, and do you hurt, after he hath done you good*. So Isai. 63. 10. *He bore them in the arms of his Providence, but they rebelled and vexed his spirit, and he was turned to be their enemy*.

None

None usually have greater judgements, then such as formerly have had sweet experience of mercy: Why? There is no hatred so great as that which ariseth out of the corruption of love: *Disappointed love, abused love groweth outrageous.* When *Amnon* hated *Tamar*, 'tis said, *The hatred wherewith he hated her, was greater then the love wherewith he loved her.* As 'tis thus with men, such a proportionable severity we may observe in the Dispensations of God, after a taste of his mercies, *Joshua* 23. 15. *It shall come to pass, as all good things are come upon you, which the Lord your God promised you, so the Lord shall bring all evil things upon you, until he hath destroyed you, when ye have transgressed the Covenant of the Lord your God.* No evils like those evils which come after mercy. No sins are so great as those sins which are committed against mercies; there is not only filthiness in them, but unkindness, *Psal.* 106. 7. *They provoked him at the Sea, even at the red Sea:* Mark, 'tis ingeminated for the more vehemency, that at the *Sea*, even at the *red Sea*, where they had seen the miracles of the Lord, and had experience of his glorious deliverance, that there they durst break out against God. See the contrary in *Judges* 2. 7. Certainly the more restraints, the greater the offence, when we sin not only against the laws of God, but the loves of God, &c.

Well then, 1. It informeth us, that there may be danger after deliverance; there are strange changes in providence, *Man in his best estate is altogether vanity.* *Psal.* 39. When you are at your best, as the Sun at the highest, there may be a Declension.

2. 'Tis a warning to those that enjoy mercies; *Sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto you:* The next judgement will be more violent. There are some special sins which you should beware of, even those which justify our unthankfulness after the receipt of mercies: As 1. *Forgetting the vows of our Misery.* *Jacob* voweth *Gen.* 28. 22. but he forgets his vow, and what followed? Horrible disorders and confusions in his Family: *Dinah* deflowred, *Reuben* goeth into his Fathers Bed, a murder committed upon the *Sichemites* under a pretence of Religion, and then *Jacob* remembreth his Vow: We promise much when we want deliverance, and when we have it, God is neglected; but he will not put it up so, by sad and disastrous accidents he

puts us in mind of our old promises. 2. When you *kiss your own hand*, bless your dragge, ascribe it to your merit and power: *Hab. 1. 16. Deut. 9. 4.* for these things are our mercies blatted. 3. When we grow proud, self-confident: If you were never so high, God will bring you low enough; 'tis a great skill to *know how to abound*. *She remembered not her last end, therefore she came down wonderfully, Lam. 1. 4.* when we forget the changes and mutations to which all outward things are obnoxious, God will give us an experience of them. 4. When you continue in your sins, the judgement is but gone *cum animo revertendi*, to come again in a worse manner: See *Psal. 106. 43.*

2. The next observation is taken from the cause of their destruction, intimated in those words [*that believed not.*] Many were the peoples sins in the wilderness, *murmuring, fornication, rebellion, &c.* But the Apostle comprehendeth all under this [*they believed not*] *Unbelief* is charged upon them as the root of all their miscarriages elsewhere, as *Numb. 14. 11.* and *Deut. 1.*

Observat. 2. 32. Whence observe, *That unbelief bringeth destruction, or is the cause of all the evil which we do or suffer.*

In handling this point, I shall open, 1. The *hainousness of Unbelief.* 2. The *Nature* of it. 3. The *Cure* of it.

i. *Hainousness.* 1. The *hainousness* of the sin: that we will consider in *general, or more particularly.*

1. *In general.*

The general considerations are these.

1. No sin doth *dishonour God* so much as unbelief doth, 'tis an *interpretative blasphemy*, a calling into question of his *mercy, power, justice*, but especially of his *truth*, 1 *John 5. 10.* *He that believeth not God, hath made him a liar*; You judge him a person not fit to be credited; the giving of *the lye* is accounted the greatest injury and disgrace amongst men; for *truth* is the ground of commerce and humane society: So that to say a man is a *liar*, is as much as to say a man is unfit to keep company with men: But especially is this a great injury to God, because he standeth more upon *his word*, then upon any other part of his name, *Psal. 138. 2.* *He hath magnified his word above all his Name*: We have more experience of God in making good his word, then in any other thing. As faith honoureth God, so doth unbelief dishonour him; what God doth

doth to the creature, that doth faith to God; God *justifieth*, *sanctifieth*, *glorifieth* the creature, and faith is said to *justify* God, Luke 7. 29. To *justify*, is to acquit from accusation; So doth faith acquit Gods truth in the word from all the jealousies which the *carnal world*, and our *carnal hearts* do cast upon him. Faith is said to *sanctifie* God, Numb. 20. 12. To *sanctifie*, is to set apart from common use; and God is sanctified when we set God aloof, above all ordinary and common causes, and can beieve that he will make good his word, when the course of all things seems to contradict it. Faith is said to *glorifie* God, Rom. 4. 20. We glorifie him *declaratively*, when we give him all that excellency which the word giveth him: Now because unbelief *accuseth* God, *limiteth* him to the course of second causes, and denyeth him his glory, therefore is it so hainous and hateful to God.

2. 'Tis a sin against which God hath declared most of his displeasure. Search the *Annals*, surveigh all the monuments of time, see if ever God spared an Unbeliever: Hence in the Wilderness, the Apostle saith, they were destroyed for *Unbelief*: Many were their sins in the Wilderness, *Murmurings*, *Lustings*, *Idolatry*, but the main reason of their punishment was, they believed not; look to their final excision and cutting off, why was it? *For unbelief they were broken off*, Rom. 11. 20. not so much for crucifying the Lord of life; the Gospel was tendered to them after Christ was slain; 'twas for not believing or refusing the Gospel: If you will know what company there is in hell, that Catalogue will inform you, *Fearful, and Unbelievers*, &c. Rev. 21. 8. if you look to temporal Judgements, that Nob'eman was trodden to death for distrusting Gods power, 2 Kings 8. 2. and could on'y see the plume, but not taste of it: Nay 'tis such a sin as God hath not spared in his own children: *Moses* and *Aaron* could not enter into the land of promise, because of their unbelief; Numb. 20. 12. So *Luke* 1. *Zachary* was struck dumb for not believing what God had revealed. Christ did never chide his Disciples so much for any thing as for their unbelief; Luke 24. 25. *O ye fools, and slow of heart to believe: and why doubt ye, O ye of little Faith?* Matth. 8. 26. he chideth them before he chideth the wind, the storm first began in their own hearts.

Hh 2

3. 'Tis

Qualitas mala vita initium habet ab infidelitate.
Aug.

3. 'Tis the *mother of all sin*; the first sin was the fruit of unbelief; we may plainly observe a *faulting of assent*, Gen. 3. 8, 4, 5. and still 'tis the ground of all miscarriages, of *hardness of heart*, and *Apostacy*, Heb. 3. 12, 13. He that believeth not the judgments and threatnings of the word, will not stick to do any evil; and he that doth not believe the promises, will not be forward to any good: All our *neglect* and *coldness* in holy duties cometh from the weakness of our faith; there is a decay at the root; did we believe Heaven, and things to come, we should be more earnest and zealous: Many are ashamed of *Adultery*, *Theft*, *Murder*, but not of *Unbelief*, which is the mother of all these.

4. *Final Unbelief is an undoubted evidence of Reprobation*: See John 10. 26. *Ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep*: And Acts 13. 48. *Unbelief is God's prison*, wherein he keepeth the *reprobate world*, Rom. 11. 32. *He hath shut them up under unbelief*, &c. And shall I continue such a *black note* upon my self? I know not how soon God may cut me off; and if I die in this estate, I am miserable for ever; *Lord I desire to believe, help my unbelief*.

5. 'Tis a sin that *depriveth us of much good*, of the comforts of providence. Nothing doth *ponere obicem*, bar and shut out Gods operation in order to our relief, so much as this sin, Mark 6. 5. *He could do no mighty work*, &c. So John 11. 40. *Said I not unto thee, if thou wouldst believe, thou shouldst see the glory of God*? So also the comfort of Ordinances, Heb. 4. 2, *The Word profited not, because it was not mixed with faith in them that heard it*. So for Prayer, James 1. 7, 8, 9. *Nay it barreth Heaven gates*; it excluded *Adam out of Paradise*; the *Israelites out of Canaan*; and us out of the *Kingdom of Heaven*, Heb. 3. 17, 18.

Well then, Let us see if we be guilty of this sin, *Take heed* (saith the Apostle, Heb. 3. 12.) *lest there be in any of you an evil heart of Unbelief*; Many have an unbelieving heart, when they least think of it, 'Tis ealie to declaim against it, but hard to convince men of it; either of the sin, or of lying in a state of *Unbelief*; 'tis the Spirits work, *The Spirit shall convince of sin, because they believe not in me*. There are many pretences by which men excuse themselves; some more gross, others more subtil

subtile. Many think that all Infidels are *without the pale* among *Turks* and *Heathens*; alas, many, too many, are to be found in the very bosome of the Church: The *Israelites* were Gods own people, and yet *destroyed because they believed not*: Others think none are unbelievers but those that are given up to the *violences* and *horrors of despair*, and do *grossly reject*, or *refuse the comforts of the Gospel*; but they are *mutakim*, the whole word is the object of Faith; the *commandments* and *threatnings*, as well as the *promises*; and *carelessness*, and *neglect* of the comforts of the Gospel, is *unbelief*, as well as *doubts* and *despairing fears*: Matth. 22. 5. *But they made light of it*: He is the worst unbeliever that scorns and sleighteth the tenders of Gods grace in Christ, as things wherein he is not concerned. Briefly then, Men may make a *general profession* of the name of Christ, as the *Turks* do of *Mahomet*, because 'tis the Religion professed there where they are born; a man may take up the opinions of a Christian Country, and not be a whit better than *Turks*, *Jews*, or *Infidels*; as he is not the taller of stature that walketh in an *higher Walk* than others do: They may *understand their Religion*, and be able to give a *reason* of the hope that is in them, and yet lie under the power of *unbelief* for all that; as many may see Countries in a Map, which they never enter into. The Devil hath knowledge, *Jesus I know*, and *Paul I know*, &c. And those that pretend to knowledge without answerable practise, do but give themselves *the lye*, 1 John 2. 29. Besides *Knowledge* there may be *assent*, and yet *unbelief* still; the Devils *assent* as well as *know*; they *believe there is one God*, James 2. and 'tis not a *naked* and *inefficacious assent*, but such as causeth *horrors* and *tremblings*. They *believe and tremble*: and they do not only believe that one article, that *there is one God*; but other Articles also, *Jesus thou Son of God, Art thou come to torment me before my time?* was the Devils speech; where there is an acknowledging of Christ, and him as the *Son of God*, and *Judge of the world*, and *increase of their torment* at the last day upon his sentence: *Assent is necessary*, but not *sufficient*; *Laws* are not sufficiently owned when they are believed to be the Kings Laws; there is something to be done as well as believed: In the primitive times *Assent* was more than it is now,

now, and yet then an *unactive* assent was never allowed to pass for faith. *Confident resting on Christ for salvation*, if it be not a resting according to the word, 'will not serve the turn, there were some that *leaned upon the Lord*, Micah 3. 11. whom he disclaimeth; 'tis a *mistaken Christ* they rest upon, and upon him by a *mistaken Faith*. 'Tis a mistaken Christ, for the true Christ is the eternal Son of God, that was born of a Virgin, and died at Jerusalem; *Bearing our sins in his Body upon a Tree*, that we being dead unto sin, might be alive unto righteousness, 1 Pet. 2. 24, the true Christ is one that gave himself for us, that he might purify us to be a peculiar people, zealous of good works, and is now gone into Heaven, there to make Intercession for us, and will come again from Heaven in a glorious manner, to take an account of our works, Titus 2. 13, 14. But now when men lie under the power and reign of their sins, and yet pretend to rest upon Christ for salvation, they set up another Christ then the word holdeth forth; and as the *Christ is mistaken*, so is the Faith: 'tis not an *Idle trust*; but such as is effectual to purge the heart; for the true faith purifieth the heart, Acts 15. 9. If besides profession, knowledge, assent, and a *loose trust*, they should pretend to assurance, or to a *strong conceit that Christ died for them*, and they shall certainly go to Heaven; this will not excuse them from unbelief; this is *ἡσυχία καὶ ἡσυχία*, the grand mistake, that the strength of Faith lieth in a strong persuasion of the goodness of our condition; and the stronger the persuasion, the better the faith. If this were true, hardness of heart would make the best faith; and he that could presume most, and be most secure and free from doubts, would be the truest believer, and the goodness of our condition would lye in the strength of our Imagination and conceit: Alas, many make full account they shall go to Heaven, that shall never come there: The foolish Virgins were very confident; and the foolish Builder goeth on with the building, never suspecting the foundation: nay, let me tell you, Assurance of a good condition, as long as we lie under the power and reign of sin, is the grossest unbelief in the world; for 'tis to believe the flat contrary to that which God hath revealed in the word: therefore none abuse the Lord, and question his Truth so much as these do;

Where:

Where hath God said, that men that live in their sins shall be saved? Nay, he hath expressly said the contrary, *Be not deceived, neither Fornicators, nor Adulterers, nor Idolaters, &c.* 1 Cor. 6. 9. so that ye give God the lie, or conceit that he will break his word for your sakes; nay (in a sence) you even dare him to make good his Truth: He hath said, *Be not deceived, you shall never enter, &c.* and you say, *Though I am an Adulterer, a Drunkard, a Worldling, I shall go to Heaven for all that*; Now in a little while you shall see *whose words shall stand, God's or yours,* Jer. 44. 28.

Once more, The Word is not supposed to be without all kind of power; men may have some relish of good things, and some experience of the powers of the world to come, and yet be in an unbelieving state: See Heb. 6. 5. Where the Apostle speaketh of a common work, opposed to τὰ ἔξωθεν τῆς σαρκὸς, to things that do accompany salvation, verie 9. or have salvation necessarily annexed to them; they may have some feeling of the power of the Truth, and yet afterwards make defection out of a love to the world, and worldly things; they may have many spiritual gifts change their outward conversation, make a glorious profession, and be thereupon enrolled among the Saints, yea be of great use and service in the Church, though for their own ends and interests, remaining all this while unrenewed, and having their worldly inclinations to honour, esteem, pleasure, profit unbroken and unmortified: for there is no such enemy to faith, as a carnal worldly heart: Therefore let men pretend what they will, when they are as eager upon the world, as if they had no other matters to mind, and the love of outward greatness doth sway with them more then the love of Heaven, and the praise of men, more then the approbation of God; and carnal ease and pleasure more then delight in God, How can they be said to believe? John 5. 44. for such kind of lusts and earthly affections are inconsistent with the power and vigour of saving faith, therefore till the bent of the heart be towards Heavenly things, and carnal affections be soundly mortified, unbelief reigneth; I pitch it upon this Evidence, partly because the great drift of conversion is to draw off the soul, as from self to Christ, and from sin to holiness, so from the World to Heaven; See 1 Pet. 1. 3. Begotten to a lively hope: and 1 John 5. 4, *He that is born of God, overcometh*

eth the world: As soon as we are converted the heart is drawn and set towards Heavenly things; partly because the main thing to be believed, next to *God's Being*, is his *Bounty*, *Heb. 6.* that we may make God our rewarder; and partly because the main work of Faith is to draw off the soul from sensible things to *things unseen*, and to come, *Hebrews 11. 1.* so that whatsoever *glorious profession* men make, or *whatsoever service* they perform in the Church, or *whatsoever experience* they have in the enlargement of Gifts, yet if they be *careless* of things to come, and eager after the things of the World; Faith is not thoroughly planted: for a main thing wanting in these temporaries, was, *a resolution to serve God for Gods sake*, or to make him their *paymaster*, which can never be, till *earthly inclinations* to the *honours, pleasures and profits* of the world be subdued, and we are willing to lay down all these things at *Christ's feet*, taking onely so much as he shall *fairly allow us* for our use.

Thus much for the *hainousness* of unbelief in the *General*.

2. *In Particular.*

2. Let me tell you, that all unbelief is not *alike hainous*, as will appear by these Considerations.

1: *Total reigning unbelief is a black mark*, such as lye under it are in the high way to Hell, *John 3. 18.* *He that believeth not, is condemned already*: The Law hath condemned him, and whilest he remaineth in that estate, the Gospel yieldeth him no hope, *John 3. 36*: *The wrath of God abideth on him*; and if he die in it, he is miserable for ever, *Revel. 21. 8.* *Fearful and Unbelievers* are reckoned among the Inhabitants of Hell. First he is condemned by that ancient Sentence, That *whosoever sinneth shall dye*; which is not reversed, but standeth in full force till Faith in Christ, *John 8. 24.* *If ye believe not that I am he, ye shall dye in your sins*: and if we continue refusing the counsels of the Gospel, to the *condemnation that is already*, to the condemnation of the Law, there is added a *new condemnation*, for despising the Gospel: But now partial unbelief where faith prevail-eth, though there be many doubts and fears, leaveth a man obnoxious to *temporal judgements*, but not to *Eternal ruin*.

2. *All*

2. *All unbelief is the more huiious, the more means you have to the contrary, as Counsels, Warnings, Promises clearly held forth; See John 15. 22. If I had not spoken to them, &c. and John 3. 19. Light is come into the world, &c. The Word is preached his magtveay, for a witness, Maith. 24. 24 with Mark 13. 9. First to them, and if not received, then against them; Did not I warn you, saith Reuben to his Brethren? Every offer and warning will be as so many swords in your Consciences. One observeth well, That twice Christ marvelled, once at the unbelief of his Countrymen the Galileans, that had so much means, Mark 6. 8. and another time at the faith of the Centurion a stranger, Mat. 8. 10. who had so little means: 'tis a thing to be marvelled at, that a people should have so much means, and profit but little: Wonder is a thing that proceedeth from ignorance; and Christ, though not ignorant, yet would express all humane affections; and the rather, that we might look upon it as a strange and uncomly thing, not to believe after so many helps vouchsafed to us.*

*Despaigne
the Creed.*

3. *The more experiences, comforts, Evidences, and manifestations of God's power and presence we have had, the greater the unbelief; This was that which provoked the Lord against Israel to destroy them in the Wilderness, Numb. 14. 11. How long will it be ere ye believe in me for all the works that I have shewed? God traineth up his People by experience, that they may know what he can or will do for them; and therefore by every experience we should grow up into a greater courage and strength of Faith, and as David, draw inferences of hope against the present danger from the Lyon and the Bear, 1 Sam. 17. 36. or as Paul, he hath, and hath, and therefore will, 2 Corinth. 1. 10. otherwise these experiences are given in vain: Christ was angry with his Disciples for not remembering the miracle of the loaves, Mat. 16. 9. when they were in a like strait again; when we shew a Chi de a letter here, and the same letter again in another word, and the same again in the third, if he should be to seek when we shew him again the same letter in the next word, we are angry, and think our teaching lost; So when God giveth an Evidence of his Power and care in this strait, and in a concession to our weakness, giveth us a like Evidence again, and in a third strait, he teacheth us how to read and apply a promise,*

mise, and yet upon the next Difficulty we are to seek again, God is angry with us, because his Condescensions are lost : and in this sense God is more angry with the Unbelief of his Children than of others, because they have more Experiences, and are so ready to distrust him that never fayleth them.

4. *The more deliberate our unbeliefs, the worse, in times of inconsiderate Passion, and in a fit of temptation it may break out from God's Children. David when he spake in haste, was faine to eat his words, 116. 11. I said in my haste all men are liars, Samuel, and all who had told him of the Kingdome, I shall never live to see the promise fulfilled; so Psal. 31. 22. I said in my haste, I am cut off, notwithstanding thou heardest the voyce of my Supplications : in a fit, discontent may break out, but 'tis presently opposed and checked; but when it groweth into a settled distemper, then 'tis worse : as that in Psal. 73. was a more lasting temptation ; therefore David calleth him Beast, verse 22. for his foolish and brutish thoughts of Providence.*

5. *Where unbelief is expressed and put into words, there 'tis more dangerous : Unbelieving thoughts are a great evil, but when they break out into murmurings and bold expostulations, with or against God, then they are worse ; 'tis better to keep the temptation within doors, than if the fire be kindled the sparks may not fly abroad to enkindle others ; you grieve God by your thoughts, but you dishonour and disparage him when they break out into words, Mal. 3. 13. Your words have been stout against me, saith the Lord : 'tis a greater daring to avow openly, and publish our suspicions of God, and discontents against him, Deut. 1. 34. The Lord heard the voyce of your words, and was wroth, saying, was one of these shall enter into my rest. Others may be perverted, and make ill use of our infirmities.*

6. *Where there are Professions to the contrary, there the unbelief is the worse. After these things do the Gentiles seek, Maith. 6. 32. Christians are not only instructed to do better, but profess to do otherwise; Distrust is a Pagan sin, you are acquainted with a particular providence, with an heavenly Father, with the happiness of another world; and for you to be worldly, distrustful, to make it your business what you shall eat and drink, that's a most unworthy thing : for a professed Infidel that believeth not Eternity, that never heard of God's Fatherly Care, nor of Heaven.*

Heaven or hell, to be altogether in the world, this were no such marvel; but for you that profess to believe the Gospel; to have your hearts fail and sink upon every occasion, and to be under the tyranny of distracting cares, how sad is it?

Thus much for the *hainousness of Unbelief*, which I was willing to represent thus at large, that you might see what just reason there was that God should *destroy those in the wilderness that believed not.*

The next thing is to open the *nature* of it. I shall here give, ^{1. The nature} 1. The *kinds*. 2. The *Notes* whereby this sin may be discovered. ^{2. of Unbelief.}

For the kinds of it:

Unbelief is two-fold, { *Negative.*
 { *Positive.*

1. *Negative Unbelief* is found in those to whom the sound of the Gospel never came, or to whom God hath denied the means whereby faith might be wrought in them; the want of means is not *their sin*, but their *punishment*, or *misery* at least; and therefore they are not condemned so much for *want of Faith in Christ*, as for not obeying the Law of Nature, for sinning against that knowledge which they received in *Adam*; now they never received the *light of the Gospel in Adam*; neither had *Adam* the knowledge thereof revealed to him; but By *special grace* after the fall, when he stood in the quality of a *private person*, then was the promise of the *Womans seed* revealed to him; therefore they that never heard of Christ, are not condemned simply for not believing in him; * for their *sins against the Law* they are condemned, not for their *unbelief against the Gospel*; that's the reason why Christ when he had said, *John 3. 18. Every one that believeth not, is condemned already*; presently addeth by way of explication, *This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, &c.* as restraining it to *positive Insidelity*; though without Christ they can never be saved, yet God will not damn them for this reason, for not believing in Christ; for he never gave them the means of the knowledge of Christ.

1. The kinds of it.

At the last day there is a difference made between them that *know not God* (i.e.) by the light of nature, and those that *obey not the Gospel* (i.e.) answer not Gods ends in revelation of the Gospel. 2 Thess. 1. 8.

2. *Positive Unbelief*, which is found in them that have means to believe in Christ, and yet neglect and refuse him, and the offers of grace and life in him, and so continue in the state of nature. This is two-fold.

1. *Total.*
2. *Partial.*

1. *Total Unbelief*, in those that continue *professed Infidels* after the tenders of the Gospel; as the Word where it came found different success, as at *Antioch*, *Acts* 13. 43. at *Iconium*, *Acts* 14. 1, 2. at *Athens*, *Acts* 17. 34. many refused to make any profession.

2. *Partial*, When men are lusted with some *general profession*, and gained to some owning of Christ, but do not fully believe in him, nor cordially embrace him; either through the *weakness of their assent*, looking upon the Gospel only as probable, or out of the *strength of their worldly and carnal affections*; they relish not, and esteem not the *counsels and comforts* of the Gospel, nor the *comforts and hopes* of the Gospel, because they are matters of *another world*, and lie out of *sight and reach*; but worldly comforts act more forcibly upon them, as being more suited to their hearts, and at hand, and ready to be enjoyed: Thus *Israel* out of *Unbelief despised the pleasant Land*; *Psal.* 106. 24. counted it not worth the looking after; and the *counsels of the Gospel* they refuse out of an indulgence to *fleshly lusts*: as there is in the Gospel the *History and Doctrine* of salvation; so there are *counsels of salvation* which must be obeyed, and therefore we hear of *obeying the Gospel*, 2. *Thes.* 1. 8. and the *Obedience of Faith* elsewhere.

This unbelief is again two-fold, 1. *Reigning*. 2. *In part broken*, though not wholly subdued.

1. *Reigning Unbelief* is in all *natural men*, who are not only guilty of unbelief, but described by the term *unbelievers*, as being persons never thoroughly gained to the obedience of the Gospel, or the acceptance of Christ, and life and peace in him. It bewrayeth it self, 1. By *hardness of heart*; they are not moved nor affected with their *own misery*, nor with *redemption by Christ*, and

and the great things of eternity depending thereupon ; nor the invitations of grace ; calling them to the enjoyment of them , *Acts 19. 9.* And divers were hardened , and believed not , &c. an hard heart is one of the Devils impregnable Forts , not easily attached by the force and power of the Word : Men are born with an hard heart ; we bring the stone with us into the world , and by positive unbelief , or by sleighting offers of grace made to us , it increaseth upon us : Hardness of heart is known by the foolishness of it , when seeing we see not , and hearing we hear not , *Acts 28. 26, 27.* when we have a grammatical knowledge of things , but no spiritual discerning ; 'tis also known by the insensibleness of it ; when men have no feeling of terrors by the Law ; of peace , joy , and hope , by the Gospel ; no taste of the good word at all , but are as stones , unmoved with all that is spoken .

2. By a neglect of spiritual and heavenly things ; they do not make it their business and work to look after those things , *Mat. 22. 5.* * But they made light of it , and went one to his Farm , another to his Merchandise ; Your callings are not your *ἔργον* your work and main business , that is to look after an interest in Christ ; therefore when this is the least thought of , and the Farm and the Merchandise , ingrosseth all our time and care , men believe not ; Could they sleight Christ and holy things if they did soundly and thoroughly believe the Word of God ? Would they not find some time to mind their souls ? Looking after the inward man , that's the main care ; and men would first regard it , if they did believe that the soul were so concern'd both in point of danger and hope ; surely when men take no heed to the great offers of the Gospel , they do not look upon it as a certain truth .

3dly. By secret suspicions in their own souls against the truth of the Gospel ; that prophane wretch said , *hæc fabula Christi* ; they look upon it as a Golden dream to make fools fond with it ; and that all opinions in religion are but a *Logomachy* , a mere strife of words , or a Doctrine to set the World together by the ears , as *Gallio* , *Acts 18. 15.* or a fancy and fond superstition , *Acts 25. 29.* and that we need not trouble our heads about it ; these are the natural thoughts which men have of the Gospel ; such thoughts may rush into the heart of a godly man , but they are abominated and cast out with indignation ; but in wicked men they reign and dwell , they live by these kind of principles :

* ἀμελήσαντες
They would
not take it into
their care and
thoughts.

* Col. 2. 2.

I remember Christ saith of his Disciples, *ἀνδρες ἰσχυροί*, John 17. 8. *they have known surely that I came out from thee*; the light of faith is an *undoubted certain light*; but in wicked men, their assent is mingled with doubting, ignorance, error, and sottish prejudices against the Doctrine and Worship of God, *Matth. 3. 14.* natural Atheism in them is not cured; and that faith which they pretend to and profess, is but a *loose wavering opinion*, not a grounded and settled perswasion of the truth of the Gospel: * the assurance of understanding (as the Apostle calleth it) dependeth upon experience and an inward sense of the truth, and is wrought by the holy Ghost, 1 Cor. 2. 4. and therefore (I suppose) proper to the Godly. 4. By rejecting the counsels of Salvation, see *Acts 13. 46.* Luke 7. 31. all natural men are children of disobedience, Eph. 2. 2. out of pride scorning either the messages of God, folly to him, 1 Cor. 2. 14. or the messengers, is not this the Carpenters Son? *Mark 6. 3.* foining and fencing with the Word, and defeating the methods of Grace used to gain them, *Rom. 10. 21.* guilty of an obstinate frowardness, *it is a people that do erre in their hearts*, *Psal. 95. 11.* not in their minds only, but their hearts; as if they did say, we desire not the knowledge of thy ways, *Job 21. 14.* 5. By the unholiness of their lives, the Apostle saith, *2 Peter 3. 11.* *We that look for such things, what manner of persons ought we to be in all holiness and godliness of Conversation?* from whence we may plainly infer, that they which are not such manner of persons do not look for such things: As faith inferreth obedience, where the Prince is, there his train will be; so is unbelief known by disobedience, when men live as carnally and carelessly as an Infidel, there is not a pin to chuse between them. 6. When men hear the Word, and never make application, or convert it to their own use, 'tis a sign they are under the power of reigning unbelief; in faith there is assent or believing the Word to be the Word of God; or that it is a faithful saying, 1 Tim. 1. 15. and then consent or approbation of the Word as a good word, or worthy saying; and then application or converting the Word to our own use; so in unbelief many doubt of the truth of the Word, or ers acknowledge not the worth of it, they do not glorifie the word, *Acts 13. 48.* most that speak well of the word and approve it in their consciences, do not urge their own

own hearts with it. *What do we say to these things?* Rom. 8. 32. and *know it for thy good*, Job 5. 27. the Word is far sooner *ap- proved then applyed*, and yet till it be applyed it worketh not; when we see our selves involved and included in the general promise and precept, and are accordingly affected, then are we said to believe: in *Psal. 27. 8.* the injunction is plural, *seek ye my face*; but the answer is singular, *thy face Lord will I seek*; thus must all truths be applyed, and that in their *method and or- der*; for there is an Analogy and proportion between them; as the Doctrine of *mans misery*, that I may consider this is my case, and having a feeling of it may groan for deliverance; the Doctrine of *redemption by Christ*, that we may put in for a share, and assure our own interest; the Doctrine of the *thank- ful life*, that we may deny our selves, take up our cross and follow Christ in the obedience of all his Precepts. The first Doctrine must be made the ground of *complaint*; the second of *comfort and hope*; the third of *resolution and practice*: But when we suffer these truths to hover in the brain without application, or hear them only as children learn them by rote, never thus re- flecting: *What am I? What have I done? What will become of me?* &c. unbelief remaineth undisturbed. 7. By *Apostacy* or falling off from God; the great business of faith is, by *patient continuance in well-doing, to look for glory, honour, and immor- tality*, Rom. 2. 8. but now to tire and grow weary, or to fall off from God as not worthy the waiting upon, argueth the height and reign of unbelief, whatever faith we pretended unto for a flash and pang. 8. *Desperation*, when conviction groweth to an height, and *legal bondage* gets the Victory of *carnal plea- sure*, Gen. 4. 13. *My sin is greater*, &c. and Jer. 18. 12. *There is no hope*, &c. when men think 'tis in vain to trouble them- selves, their damnation is fixed, and therefore resolve to go to hell as fast as they can, such desperate wickedness may there be in the heart of a man.

2. Unbelief in part broken, and so it implyeth the remain- ders of this natural evil in the God y; in whom though faith be begun, yet it is mixed with much weakness, *Mar. 9. 24. Lord I believe, help my unbelief*: this unbelief is manifested.

1. By a *loathness to apply the comforts of the Gospel*; 'tis the hardest matter in the World to bring God and the soul together,

or

or to be at rest in Christ, when we are truly sensible we draw back, Luke 5.8. *depart from me* (saith Peter) *for I am a sinful man*; he should rather say, draw nigh to me; the poor trembling sinner thinketh so much of *the judge*, that he forgets *the father*; though the soul longeth for Christ above all things, yet it is loath to take him for comfort and reconciliation, but floatheth up and down in a suspensive hesitancy.

2. *By calling Gods love into question upon every affliction, and in an hour of temptation unravelling all our hopes*: * see Psal. 77.7,8,9,10. As if the Lord were the God of the Mountains, and not of the Valleys; we are wont to say, if God did love us, why is this befallen us? these are fits of the old distemper: Christ when crucified would not let go his interest, but cryeth out, *My God, My God*.

* See Isa. 49.
14. and Judges
6. and 13.

3. *By fears in a time of danger, carnal fears, such as do perplex us when we are employed in Christs work and service, as the Disciples that were embarked with him, were afraid to perish in his company, Why are ye so fearful, O ye of little faith. Math. 8. 26. filial fear or reverence of God is the daughter of faith, as distrustful fear is the enemy of it; trouble is the touchstone of faith; if we cannot commit our selves to God in quietness of heart, it argueth weakness, God hath undertaken to bring his people out of every streight in a way most conducing to his glory and their welfare, Rom. 8. 28. and therefore when the word yieldeth up no support, Psalm 119. 50. and the promises of God cannot keep us from sinking and dependency of heart, we bewray our unbelief.*

4. *By Murmuring in case of carnal disappointment, discontent argueth unbelief, they quarrel with Gods Providences, because they believe not his promises, Psal. 106. 24. They believed not his Word, but murmured in their Tents; tis ill, and they cannot see how it can be better: So Deut. 1. 32. with 34. in this you believed not the Lord your God.*

5. *By carking in case of streights, bodily wants are more pressing then spiritual; here faith is put to a present trial, and therefore here we bewray our selver, Math 6. 30. Shall he not much more cloath you, O ye of little faith; he doth not say, of no faith; for the temptation is incident to a Godly man; they do otherwise bewray their unbelief in distrusting God about out-*

ward

ward supplies then about *eternal life*, which yet I confess is very irrational; for if a man cannot trust God with his *estate*, how shall he trust him with his *soul*; and to a considerate person there are far more *prejudices* against *eternal life*, than against *temporal supplies*: Look as it was a folly in *Martha* to believe that *Lazarus* should rise at the general resurrection, and to distrust his being raised from the dead after four days lying in the Grave, *John 11.24.* so 'tis a great folly to pretend to expect *life eternal*, and not to be able to depend upon God for the supplies of *life temporal*.

6. By *coldness and carelessness in the spiritual life*; if men did believe that heaven were such an excellent place, they would not so easily turn aside to the contentments of the flesh, and the profits of the world; men have but a conjectural apprehension of things to come, of the comforts of another World; as things at a distance, sometimes we see them, and sometimes we lose their sight, so that we are not certain whether we see them, yea or no; so it falleth out in heavenly matters, we are poor short-sighted creatures, *2 Pet. 1. 9.* sometimes we have a glimpse of the glory of the World to come, some flashes, and again the mind is beclouded; and that's the reason why we minde these things so little, and seek after them so little; a steady view and found unbelief would engage us to more earnestness: they that believe the high price of our calling, will press on to the mark, *Phil. 3. 14.* surely men do not believe that heaven is worth the looking after, otherwise they would seek it more diligently, *Heb. 6. 12.* a poor beast that is going homeward goeth cheerfully.

7. Indirect courses to get a living and subsistence in the World, as if God were not All-sufficient, *Gen. 17. 1.* to break through where God hath made up the hedge, argueth that we do not depend upon him, as by temporizing, or by unjust gain: This for a fit and in some distemper may be incident to Gods Children.

3. The last thing in the method proposed, is the cure of unbelief; God by his mighty power can onely cure it, *Eph. 1. 19.* of Unbelief. but the means which we must use may be reduced to two heads,

1. Cautions. 2. Directions.

1. Cautions, 1. *Take heed of setting God a task*, Psalm 78. 20. *Can the Lord prepare a Table in the Wilderness, &c. so Math. 26. 40. If thou be the Son of God, come down from the Cross*; this is to go beyond the promise, and to indent with God upon conditions of our own making; so *Math. 4. If thou be the Son of God, turn these stones into Bread*; so when we prescribe to God in matter of allowance. We would have God maintain us at such a rate, be so fed, so clothed, have so much by year, such portions for our children; *he that will be rich, &c. 1 Tim. 6. 9. God never undertook to give us meat for our lusts*; when we subject His Providence to our direction, and prescribe what he shall do for our satisfaction, we do but make a snare for our selves.

2. *Take heed of betraying faith, by distrusting present means*; 'tis an usual thing. *Luke 16. If one came from the dead they would not believe*; if we had Oracles or Miracles, or God did speak to us from Heaven as heretofore, then we should not fault in our trust as we now do; but by this excuse you impeach the Scriptures; *Moses and the Prophets* are a sufficient ground for faith, and extraordinary means will not work on them upon whom ordinary do not prevail; there were weaknesses then, and so there will be, whatsoever Dispensation God use, Man is Man still, *they believed not though he opened the Clouds and commanded Manna from Heaven, Psal. 78. 23.*

3. *Take heed of Issues in principles of Faith*; Foundation Stones if laid loose, in danger the whole building; take notice of the first hesitancy, *Gen. 3. Yea hath God said?* So *Math. 4. 3. If thou be the Son of God, &c.* there was a plain Oracle from Heaven determining it a little before, *Thou art my beloved Son*, but the Devil would fain draw it to an I F.

4. *Beware of sin*; doubts are the fumes of sin, like the vapours that come from a foul stomach; *uprightness begetteth serenity and clearness*, as in nature there is often a circular generation; vapours beget flowers, and showers beget vapours; so in moral and spiritual things, there is such a circular generation; *unbelief maketh way for sin, and sin for unbelief*; sin will weaken trust, it cannot be otherwise; *shame, and horror, and doubt*, these are the consequences of sin; God never undertook to bear us out in the Devils work.

2. Directions.

2. Directions. 1. *Strengthen your Assent to the Word of God*; site if well kindled will of it self burtt out into a flame; so assurance and comfort would more easily follow, if there were a *through and undoubted assent* to the truths of the Word; we take them up hand over head, and then when a temptation cometh, no wonder that the *building tottereth*, when the *foundation* is so weak; there are several degrees of assent, *conjecture*, which is but a lighter inclination of the mind to that which is probable; *opinion*, which is a stronger inclination to think, that, that which is represented is true; but there is *formido oppositi*, 'tis mixed with *hesitancy* and *doubts*, *διστασις*, *weak faith*, or firm adherence upon sufficient conviction; yet doubts may arise, and in time of temptation this degree of Assent may be overborn; but above this, there is a *through certainty* or *assurance of understanding*, Col. 2. 2. We should never cease till we come to this; 'tis a great mistake to think that we need not look after the settling of our assent to the truths of the Word: but take these for supposed, but in an hour of temptation we are made sensible of our folly herein; and if I am not mistaken, much of our *carelessness* and *unsettledness of life* doth proceed from hence.

2. In settling assent begin with *natural principles*, and then go on to those which are *spiritual and mystical*; As *Gods Being*, and *Gods Bounty*, in the everlasting rewards, Heb. 11. 6. the necessity of *purity* and *holiness*, Heb. 12. 14. the *fall and misery* of the creature; and then our *redemption by Christ*, &c. I observe the Apostles, when they came to gain men to faith, began with truths suited to their capacity and present understanding: With the vulgar they evince *Creation and Providence*, by arguments taken from *showers of rain*, and the courses of nature, Acts 14. 16, 17. with the *Philosophers* they urge the notions of a *first cause*, and a *first mover*, and those *inclinations* in nature towards an eternal good, Acts 17.

3. Urge your hearts with the truths you assent too, and work them upon your affections, Rom. 8. 31. Heb. 2. 3. and Job 5. 27:

4. Observe the disproportion of your respects to things present, and things to come. If the Judgment Seat were fixed, and the Books opened, how would natural men tremble! now faith

should make it as present, *Heb. 11. 1.* the Apostle saith, *I saw the dead small and great stand before the Lord, &c. Revel. 20. 12.* saith, which is the evidence of things not seen, should see it, as if it were in being; the light of faith differeth not from the light of Prophecy, in regard of the certainty of the thing, which is to come, or the assured expectation of it; the light of Prophecy requireth a special Revelation, and differeth in degree from the light or sight of faith, as it causeth rapture and extatick motions; but as to the seeing of things to come with certainty, there they agree: well then, if you would discern the strength or weakness of your faith, observe how differently you are affected with what is present, and what is future. So also how differently you are affected with things visible, and things invisible, with things temporal and eternal; if upon easie terms you might have a good bargain for lands and riches, how readily would men imbrace the offer? for temporal profit, what pains will they take? but now in things of soul-concernment we are not alike affected, which is an argument we do not believe them; in all cases tis good to put spiritual things in a parallel temporal instance; we are taught that wisdom, *Mal. 1. 8.* Offer is now to the Governor, &c. would we do thus to an earthly Potentate as we do to God? If an able potent friend promise help in troubles, how are we cheared with it? If God promise the same things, we are little comforted; if every offence that we commit were liable to the notice of man, and our punishment should be to hold our had in scalding Lead for half an hour, men would be more afraid to offend (then now they are) in the sight of God, who knoweth all their thoughts, and hath threatned eternal torment; if the tasting of such a meat would bring present death, who would be so fool-hardy as to meddle with it; nay, when a thing is but likely to do us hurt, as some meats, in case of the Cholick, Gout, or Stone, how cautious are we?

To conclude all, let me give you *Chrysostoms* supposition; for besides unbelief there is somewhat in the strength of evil inclination: suppose a man mightily desirous of rest and sleep, so that he can hardly hold open his eyes, and there were an offer made him of free and undisturbed rest for one night; but in case he gave way to it, to be held under an hundred years torment, would he venture, and with so great an hazard gratifie

gratifie his drowſie humour? yet ſuch is our *fearleſneſs* and *ſecurity*, that we can run the hazard of eternal torment, for a little carnal ſatisfaction; if a man were ſentenced to death and in danger of execution every moment, would not he beſtir himſelf, and improve all his Interſt for a pardon, we are all *condemned already*; but how few are ſolicitous to get a Copy of their diſcharge. 5. Bewail the relicks of unbelief, *Mar. 9. 24.*

6. Chide your hearts for your *dejection* and *diſtruſt* of Gods providence; as *Pſal. 42. 5. Why art thou diſquieted, O my ſoul, &c.* and *Pſalm 77. 10. this is my infirmity*: 'tis the duty of a gracious man to rebuke *his fears*, to chide himſelf for admitting *miſtakes* of Gods love, *ſuggeſtions* of unbelief, and *diſputes* againſt the promiſes.

7. Conſider how willing Chriſt is to help you, he carrieth home *the ſtray Lamb* upon his own ſhoulders rejoycing, *15. 5.* how he prizeth the weak beginnings of Faith, *ſmoking Flax* will he not quench, *Matth. 12. 20.* taketh notice of the *green Figs*, *Cant. 2.* with a mild condeſcenſion indulgeth our infirmities; reach hither thy fingers Thomas, *John 20.* This for the Cure of Unbelief.

VERSE VI.

And the Angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting Chains under darkness unto the judgement of the great day.

IN this Verse you have the second instance from the *Apostate Angels*, who notwithstanding the dignity and height of their nature, upon their rebellion were left to a dreadful punishment: in this instance there is an Argument, *not à pari*, (as in the former verse) but *à majori ad minus*, not from a like Case, but from the greater to the less; for if God spared not such creatures, as by the grace of Creation were advanced to such an excellency of being; certainly he will not spare us what ever Gospel privileges we have, if we walk unsuitably.

In these words observe 1. *The Sin of the Angels*, [They kept not their first Estate.] 2. *Their Punishment*; which is two-fold.

§ 1. Present and felt.

℥ 2. Future and decreed.

1. *Present*, which is also double, 1. *Pena damni*, their loss [they left their own habitation.] 2. *Pena sensu* their punishment of pain or sense [He hath reserved in everlasting Chains under darkness.]

2. *Future and Decreed* [unto the judgement of the great day.]

Because I will not perplex the discourse by grasping at too much at one time, I shall discuss each circumstance a part, and in distinct explication. I begin with the phrases implying *their sin* *fin* *sin* and *fall*. [And the Angels] the expression is plural, to note the great number of those which fell, [their first estate *πρῶτὴ ἀρχὴ*] the word may be translated either *their principality* or *their beginning*, which is all one; *first estate*, if you translate it *principality*, it will well enough suit with the scope of the Apostle; and the Angels are often called *Principalities* in Scripture, because of their great Power and excellent Nature: So Col. 1. 16. *Thrones, Dominions, Principalities and Powers*; all which terms

terms imply the Dignity of the Angelical Nature; nay, the Devils themselves because of that power and cunning which they still retain, are called *Principalities*, Ephes. 6. 12. *We wrestle not against Flesh and Blood, but against Principalities and Powers, against the Rulers of the darkness of this world.* If you translate it *beginning or first estate*; it will more fully express the misery and fall of the *Apostate Angels*, they being not only departed from the excellency and power, but from the integrity and righteousness wherein they were first created: So that the point is, *That the Angels are fallen from the condition of their original excellency and integrity.*

So Peter, 2 Pet. 2. 4 ἀγγέλων ἀμαρτησάντων, *God spared not the Angels that sinned, &c.* and John 8. 44. *the Devil abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him,* that purity and integrity wherein they were created is there called *truth*, because truth is the perfection of any rational creature, and that *holiness* which they had was only to be kept up by the truth or right notions of God; in opening this point I shall inquire.

1. What was this *ἀρχή* or first estate:
2. What was *their* *πίστις*, or how they departed from it.
3. How they came to sin.
4. The Number of them that fell.
5. The Time.

I do confess the Scriptures do speak somewhat sparingly of the *nature* or *fall* of Angels, they being calculated chiefly for the use of man; but some hints there are which we shall take notice of, and improve, not to *satisfie curiosity*, but to *serve profit*.

1. What is this *first estate*, from which they are departed. I answer, their Original condition of *Holiness* and *Happiness*; every creature which the Lord made, he saw it to be good; much more the Angels whom God created for his own Train and Company; they are called *the Sons of God*, Job 38. 7. Because they bore his Image, and that in a more eminent degree than man, as being wholly spiritual substances; just, holy, pure, in all qualities representing God their Father; 'tis said of man, *Thou hast made him little lower than the Angels*, Psal. when man was at his best, there was an inferiority, the Image of God

God was given to us in a less degree; although we were placed above all visible creatures; yet than the Angels were a *little lower*; that they were excellent, appeareth in that the *Angelical Obedience* is made the pattern of ours, *Matth. 6. 10.* And our happiness in Heaven is expressed by the condition of their nature, *Matth. 22. 30. They are as the Angels of God in Heaven*; yea, 'tis notable, that when the Scriptures would express any excellency, they use to say 'tis fit for Angels; thus *Manna* is called * *Angels food*, not as if they needed food, spirits are not capable of corporal refreshments; but if so high a Creature should need food, he could have no better. So the *Tongue of Angels*, *1 Cor. 13. 1.* that is, with a tongue becoming Creatures of so perfect an understanding; but you will say, these expressions are meant of the *good Angels*: I answer, that at their first Creation, they had the same common nature and excellency, as appeareth by the name of *Thrones, Dominions, and Powers*, which they yet retain in common with the *good Angels*; yea and by that Power, Wisdom, and Knowledge which is yet left; in their innocency they were *alike good*, and *alike happy*, and could contemplate and behold God, and embrace him with delight, as others did; all that is supernatural in the good Angel, is, the *grace of Confirmation*; by which they abide in the *knowledge and love of God*, whereas others left *τὴν ἀρχὴν* their first estate; and 'tis probable this grace was given to the good Angels, in the *very moment of their creation*, before any merit of theirs, or use of their natural abilities, as appeareth by the others *sudden fall*; and because they are chosen in Christ, who is the Head of Men and Angels, *Col. 1. 16.*

2. What was *their sin*; there is a great deal of difference among Divines about it, for herein they proceed by *guess and conjecture*, rather than any *certain proof*. Howbeit there is enough to vindicate Gods Justice against them, *qua vis peccata* (saith *Aquinas*) *sunt in malis Angelis*; according to his Opinion they have the guilt of all sin upon them, as tempting man to every sin; but what was the *special formal sin*, is not so easily determined: some say, *affectation of the Divinity*; others say, *flat Rebellion* against the Law of their Creation, or *rash attempts* against the Empire and Sovereignty of God; others

others, *envy*, because of the *humane nature* exalted above the *Angelical* in Christ; he took not the seed of the Angels, Heb. 2. 16. but whether that mystery were made known to them is uncertain, rather there are probabilities to the contrary; for the good Angels know it now by Gods dispensations to the Church, Eph. 3. 10. others think, *Rebellion against a particular Law* given to them; as that concerning the eating the forbidden fruit was to man; whether it were affecting a higher degree above their Creation; or refusing their office and *ministration about man*; or confidence in their own gifts, and received excellency; in a matter of so great uncertainty, 'tis hard to determine. To state their sin, take these Propositions.

1. The Law which made their act to be sin, was the *Moral Law*, as being the copy of Gods holiness, his revealed will to all rational creatures; and they are said to sin, 2 Pet. 2. 4. and ἀμαρτία sin, is ἀνομία, a * *transgression of a Law*; and of no other Law do we read, but of the *moral Law*, which (as is probable) was given to the Angels, excepting only such things as are not suitable to a spiritual nature; the Commandment concerning *Adultery* or *unlawful Propagation*: for they * *neither* * Mat. 12. 30. *marry nor give in marriage*, a thing proper to the bodily life.

2. The most likely thing in their sin was *Pride*; there is Pride in every sin, namely a despising and contempt of the Commandment; and this is a sin agreeable enough to a *spiritual nature*; as *Adultery*, *Drunkenness*, and such sins are proper to a *corporal and sensitive nature*; ὑπερηφανία (saith Chrysostom) δυνάμει ἀσώματων κατέσχευε καὶ λαλῖσθαιεν αἰσθεῖν: To prove it, the * Fa- * Gregory. thers usually quote that place, Isa. 14. 12. *How art thou fallen Austine. from Heaven O Lucifer Son of the morning, for thou hast said in Damascen, &c. thy heart, I will ascend above the heights of the Clouds, I will exalt my Throne above the Stars of God, I will be like the most high:* But these are but metaphorical Passages concerning the *King of Babylon*; and the ground of the mistake was, because the Angels are often in Scripture set forth by *Stars*, as Job 38. 7. That testimony which is most cogent, is in 1 Tim. 3. 6. *Ordain not a novice, lest being lifted up with Pride he fall into the condemnation of the Devil*; that is, lest he make himself guilty of that sin for which the Devil was condemned and rejected of * See my Notes God, namely, of *Pride*; and * James 3. 15. *Pride is called there.*

Devillish Wisdom; the sin is often to be read in the judgment that followeth it, Gods throwing them down from the dignity of their estates; was a sign that they aspired above it; and it may be collected from the first temptation; *ye shall be as Gods*; as himself said in the sence of the Fathers, *ero sicut altissimus*; so to our first Parents he said, *eritis tanquam dii*.

3. They do best that make it a compound sin, accommodating all opinions; for look as there are many sins in that one Act by which *Adam* fell, *Unbelief, Pride, Ingratitude, Disobedience*, &c. so in this act of the Angels there might be many sins; for though *Pride* be a chief sin in it, yet what kind of *Pride* it was, or how discovered, it cannot be determined, every opinion is asserted with equal probability; it might be *envy at man*, as we see the good Angels rejoiced at their happiness, *Job* 38. 7. *Luke* 2. 14. 15. and *Luke* 15. 7. or *affectation of worship*; as we see now they delight in it, or any other rebellion against Gods Empire and Majesty.

Thirdly, How they came to sin, the Angels being created pure, they had *no lust within* to incline them; being in Heaven they had *no object without*, to draw and allure them; there was *no evil treasure*, *no tempter*; how could they sin? I Answer; 'Tis probable that many of the Angels sinned by temptation, and seducement; and that one great Angel now called *Beelzebub* first fell, and drew the rest after him, *Mat.* 25. 41. *The Devil and his Angels*, and *Mat.* 20. 25. *Beelzebub the Prince of Devils*; it was the name of the Idol of the *Ekronites*, 2 Kings 1. 2. and signified the god or Lord of flies; now because the Jews knew that they were Devils that were worshipped in the Idols of the Gentiles, they gave the names of the Idols to the Devils or evil Angels; and the chief of the Devils they called by the name of *Beelzebub*. So *Mat.* 12. 24. implying, one that was the Prince of the unclean spirits, called *Devil, Satan, the great Dragon*, and the God of this World; from all which we may possibly collect, that there was a Prince or Chief of the Apostate Angels, who was the Ring-leader in this Faction and Rebellion against God. 2. Because the question returneth; How came the first Angel then to fall? I Answer, 'Tis hard to conceive how sin came into the Angels first; all that we can say, is this, that the Angels were created good, yet mutable and free,

free, and they voluntarily chose not to abide in their own estates. All the answer *Anselm* would give to this question was, *Dei non sunt*, they are not God; 'tis Gods Prerogative alone to be immutable, they might sin because they were creatures; and *Aquinas* giveth this reason, God cannot sin, because his act is his Rule; but all creatures, though never so pure, if not assisted by Grace, may sin, *Job* 4. 18, he chargeth his Angels with folly; there is mutability in the Angelical nature, there called folly: Certainly God was not the cause of their fall, by infusing evil to them; 'twas the error of the *Manichees*, to say they were created evil; nor by his presence, for that enforceeth nor; nor his voluntary permission, for they were left to their own sway; nor his decree, for that is within himself, and doth not compel the creature; neither is God to be looked upon as consenting to the action, in that he did not hinder them from it; or in that he did not sustain them by his own Grace; for he oweth this Grace to none, and giveth it when and to whom he pleaseth; and in the Angelical nature, as well as the humane, he would discover his justice and mercy, and the freedom of his dispensations.

Fourthly, *The number*; How many fell? The Schoolmen are too rash; some say, just as many fell as stood; others, that a third part fell, abusing that place, *Rev.* 12. 4. That the Dragon drew a third part of the Stars of Heaven after him: Whereas that is meant of defection in the Church; certain we are, many fell, and therefore 'tis said Angels in the Text: that the number is greater, appeareth in that the World is full of these evil spirits; and a whole Legion, which containeth some thousands, is said to possess one man, *Luke* 8. 30.

5. For the time; in the general very soon; therefore 'tis said, *John* 8. 44. That *Sathan* was a Murderer from the beginning: And *1 John* 3. 9. The Devil sinneth from the beginning; that is, presently after his Creation, created these Angels were; 'twas the error of *Valentius* and *Basiliides*, in the age next the Apostles, that they were not created, but begotten of God; these primitive Monsters broached it to the disgrace of Jesus Christ the only Son of God; but that they were created, see *Col.* 1. 16. and *Psalms* 148. 2. and created they were in time: some of the Greek Writers supposed the Angels to be made before the world;

but there is no ground for that, there being but one beginning of all created Beings; and 'tis said, *before the beginning nothing was made*, John 1. 3. therefore created they were the *second day* with the Heavens, as being of the same matter; as man was made when his seat and dwelling place was perfected; so the Angels, when their seat and place of residence was prepared; *Moses* mentioneth them not, because he treateth of the *visible World*, and *corporal Beings*; now 'tis certain, that being created they sinned ere man fell, for the Devil in and by the Serpent *seduced Eve*, 2 Cor. 11. 3. therefore probably they fell a little after their Creation, not in the very instant, that it might appear they were not *naturally evil*; 'tis probable that some time interceded between their *creation* and *desertion*; but a very little time, to shew the *mutability of the Creature*.

Let me now apply what hath been spoken, and press you to consider it in your thoughts, and to consider it with *observation* and *application* to your selves. 1. Consider it with observation; and there is scarce a matter that can be more profitably amplified in your thoughts; we have the most impartial view of things in another person: Oh think of this dreadful instance, the fall of the Angels.

1. Observe, *That such excellent creatures fell*; Angels themselves were created *excellent*, but *mutable*; certainly, we that dwell in houses of clay, and whose foundation is in the dust, had need be more cautious; if they be mutable, we are weaker and more mutable; to see such glorious Stars leave their station, and fall from Heaven like lightning, it should make us poor creatures tremble and look to our own standing, lest we also fall, 1 Cor. 10. 12. *self confidence* is the next way to *ruine*; God only cannot sin, because his act is his rule; there may be a *great height*, *strong abilities*, *rare accomplishments* of *nature* and *grace*; and yet you see these cannot exempt us from *shamefull falls*, without the Divine concurrence; the Angels were the Courtiers of Heaven; the glory of the Creation, in the first rank of the created Beings, and yet they fell; who can presume to stand, when Angels fall?

2. *They fell soon, a little after their Creation*; there is no created excellency, but if left to it self will quickly undo it self; How soon do creature perfections fade?

Surely

Surely there is no stability but in Christ; as the *Angels*, so *Adam* fell a little after his Creation, *Psalms* 49. 12. *Adam* being in honour abideth not; in the Original, abideth not for a night; and if it be applyed to the first *Adam*, it implyeth that he left the honour of his innocency the first day; in the morning innocent, and at night a *finer*: our new state in this regard is better then innocency, and the grace of regeneration exceedeth that of creation: the Lord would still keep the creature depending, our estate in Christ onely is sure, because there our strength lieth in another: let us then work out our Salvation with fear and trembling: If *Angels* fell, and *Adam* fell, when they had no such mixt nature and divided principles as we have, what will become of us? Neither Man nor Angel can be kept without a surety; and unless Christ be continually present with his own gifts, there is no standing.

2 Tim. 2. 1. My Son be strong in the Grace that is in Christ Jesus.

Thirdly, they fell dreadfully, and from *Angels* became *Devils*, exercising theft, lying, envy, murder towards men: the best things corrupted become worst; as no Vinegar so tart as that which is made of the sweetest Wine; when men sinne against light and grace they become cruel; the revolvers are profound to make slaughter, saith the Prophet, *Hosea* 5. After profession the fall is most desperate: their latter end is worse then their beginning, 2 Pet. 2. 20. What a malice have these evil *Angels* now against God and man! they go about seeking whom they may devour; none so bad as *Apostates*.

Fourthly, their fall made way for ours, by this means there came to be a Tempter in the World, the fall of *Angels* occasioned the fall of man, and the fall of man the coming of Christ: do but go home with reverence, and observe how by the bare permission of God the Divine Decrees were accomplished, and wonder at the purity of that unspotted providence that is conversant about sin and evil, but not conscious to it: the *Angels* led the way, and man followed, and to occasion was given for the discovery of the manifold wisdom of God to men and *Angels*, Eph. 3. 10.

Fifthly, so many fell as were not elected by God, there was Election and Reprobation among the *Angels*; among the most glorious Creatures God would shew the liberty of his Counsels, not only amongst men, the lower sort of rational Creatures, but
among

among Angels: Therefore the Apostle speaketh of *Elect Angels*, 1 *Tim.* 5. 2. Why should *Clay* murmur, when *Gold* is refused? *As* some of the Angels were appointed to be vessels of *disfavour*, who art thou that repliest upon God; *ἀνταρτίωνται*, *Rom.* 9. 20. that will be disputing the sovereignty of God, and ask the reason why he giveth grace to some and not to others? wonder at it, till thou canst *understand* it, * *disputare vis mecum?* *mirare mecum*, & clama, O *Altitudo*! Gods Decrees are hard meat, not easily digested by carnal reason: a proud creature cannot endure to hear of *Gods sovereignty*, it awakeneth our *secularity* to hear of a distinction in the Counsels of God, and that grace runneth in a narrower channel then whole Mankind; do but consider, amongst the Angels some are *past by*, and others *confirmed*, and who art thou, O man, that repliest?

* *Augustine.*

Vide Irenaeum
lib 4. cap. 78.
Damas lib. 2.
Orth. fid. cap. 3.
Et Neiremb.
Theoph. &c.

Sixthly, In the Election of Angels pardoning mercy is not so much glorified as in the election and calling of men; then was grace shewed but not mercy, none of the fallen Angels were saved, but fallen man is called to grace in Christ: we were all in our blood when God said *Live*, the whole lump and mass of mankind was fallen; probably next to the free Counsels of God, that was the reason the whole humane nature fell, but not the whole Angelical nature, but onely a part of it, so that the Kind it self needed not to be repaired; their sins argued more malice because of the height of their understanding; they sinned without a Tempter, but the reason of reasons is the will and gracious good pleasure of God, who was willing to shew pardoning mercy to us, and not to them; the good Angels had confirmation, but we redemption; we are reconciled, they continued: Love after a breach made is more remarkable.

Seventhly, from the sin in general, by which they fell, which was by pride; see the danger of this sin, it always goeth before falling, the Angels lost their holiness out of a desire of greatness, they would be over all and under none; 'tis dangerous when men minde rather to be great then good. In Scripture we have two notable instances, of the fall by pride, and our restoration by humility; the Angels fell by pride and aspiring; and Christ restored mankind by being humble, lowly, and submitting himself even to the death of the Cross: Adam would be as God, and so ruined us; and Christ that was God became as man, and

so saved us; to counterwork Satan he layeth aside the glory of his Godhead, he layeth aside the glory of his Godhead and puts on an *humble garb*, saving us not by *power*, but by *suffering*: well then, look upon pride as the sure fore-runner of a fall.

Eighthly observe, *the particular fall is uncertain* though the *general sin* may be known, as how this pride was discovered, whether in a *thought*, or by some *bold attempt* is not known; it doth not so much pertain to edification and salvation to know their sin, as to know our own: The Scriptures direct us to *look inward*, 'tis more for our profit to keep out Satans power, then to know the circumstances of his fall; let us not fall with him: Peter would know *Johns* end, but Christ rebuketh him, *what is that to thee? follow thou me*; Joh. 21. 20, 22. We betray our duties by our *curiosity*; surely we should be more at home, and look to our own beam, that we may not ascribe others before the *chair of censure*, but our selves before the *tribunal of conscience*.

Ninthly observe, *that the first sin that ever was, was a punishment to it self*; they kept not their first estate, the *sin* is expressed in such a phrase as doth imply their *lost*; duty hath its reward in its mouth, as the sacks of the Patriarchs their moneys; so sin its punishment; never think that you shall get any thing by offending God, you do but *defile*, and *debase*, and *degrade* your selves from your own excellency when you sin: 'tis Hell enough to turn away from God, and misery enough to pollute and *stain his image* in our souls; the fall of the Angels is described to be a departure from their own happiness.

Secondly, Consider it *with Application* to your selves: First, apply it for humiliation; we lost *τὴν ἀρχὴν*, our *first estate*, as well as the Angels; God made man *upr ght*, but they sought out *many inventions*, Eccles. 7. 29. Read your own guilt and Apostacy in the sin of the Angels; usually the *Page* is whipped to shew the *Prince* his fault; but here the *Princes* and noblest part of the world are set out to us for examples, that in their ruine and dreadful fall we might understand our own. Do but observe the Parallel; they had *ἀρχὴν*, an *original estate* of *happiness* and *holiness*, and so we, they fell soon, so we; they fell by *Pride*, so we; the Angelical fall is our glass; we are a kind

kind of Devils, and Apostates from God : they were driven out of Heaven, so we out of Paradise : they are punished with darknets, and so we. Secondly, apply it for Caution, there is a new beginning in Christ; the Apostle saith, *Heb. 3. 14. We are made partakers of Christ, if we hold τῆν ἀρχήν, the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end* : If we should break with God again upon this new stock, there will be no more sacrifice for sin; faith which is the gift of Gods grace, is the beginning and root of a new life in Christ : if we should forfeit this, we cannot expect God will deal with us any more :

Secondly, the punishment of the Angels.

Observat.

We are now come to the phrases that imply their punishment, and that we made to be two-fold, *Present and future*; the first part of the present punishments is *pæna damni*, their loss implied in that Clause [*Leaving their own habitation*] in which their guilt is further intimated, for the Apostle here maketh it to be their Act, but *Peter* in the Parallel place maketh it Gods Act, *2 Pet. 2. 4. God spared not his Angels that sinned, but cast them down to Hell*, without further diversion we may take up the point thus ; *That the Apostate Angels upon their sin and fall departed from that place of happiness and glory which before they enjoyed.* So *Rev. 12. 8. Their place was found no more in Heaven, and the great Dragon was cast out, that old Serpent called the Devil and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world, he was cast out into the earth and his Angels were cast out with him.* That Scripture I confess is mystical, and speaketh of the overcoming of Satan in this present world, & casting him out of the Church which is there expressed by *Heaven*, as the *World by Earth* : For I observe in that Book the Church is sometimes expressed by terms suitable to the *Judaical state*. So in *Rev. 11. 2. The Church is called the Temple*, and the *World the Court*, and sometimes by the *Celestial state*; and so the Church is called *Heaven*, and the *World Earth*; but however there is a plain allusion to Satans first fall from Heaven, as the ground of these expressions, and therefore I may use that place as a proof in this matter, that you may understand the loss of the Angels : give me leave to lay down these Propositions. 1. *The place of their innocence was Heaven*, round about the Throne of God, where the good Angels do continually behold his face, and stand before him, *Dan. 7. 10.* In such a blessed place, and in such blessed company was their

their *δικητόν*, their abode or habitation: when God disposed the several Creatures into proper mansions and places of abode, he took the Angels into his own train and glorious attendants, that they might be still with him, other Creatures were his *Servants*, those his *Courtiers*, that is, his Household and ordinary *Servants* that were to attend as in his Chamber of Presence. 2. In this place they were to enjoy God and glorify God, their happiness was to enjoy God, their duty to glorify him; there they beheld his face, *Matth.* 18. 10. for vision and sight of God is the happiness of rational Creatures, and therefore our happy estate is expressed by *beholding him face to face*: and David saith *Psal.* 16. 11. *In thy presence, or in thy face is fulness of joy*; in Heaven, then did God manifest himself to them, there they were to applaud his Counsels, receive his Commands, to love God with the most perfect embraces of their will, and to fulfil his Commandments, hearkning to the voice of his Word. 3. From this place they are now driven into the lower parts of the World, as being a place more fit for sin and misery: that the place into which they are driven is the bottom and center of the Earth, cannot be shewen out of Scripture, rather the contrary; for sometimes they are said to fly up and down in the Air, and therefore is Sathan called the *Prince of the power of the Air*, *Eph.* 2. 3. and the other Devils, *Principalities and spiritual wickednesses in high places*, *Eph.* 6. 12. They aspire to get as high as they can, but they can get no further then the Regions of the Aire; and sometimes they are said to compass the earth to and fro, *Job* 1. 7. The Earth is Sathans walk and circuit, where he seeks to do mischief, and sometimes they are in the Sea, *Matth.* 8. 3. for as yet they are not in that prison and place of torments, where they shall abide for ever under the wrath of the Lord: therefore when Christ checketh their power in the world, they expostulate with him, *Jesus thou son of David, art thou come to torment us before our time*, *Matth.* 8. 29. and besought him that he would not cast them into the great deep; by which some understand the final place of their residence and torments, even the lowest place of the world, most remote from the highest Heavens, which place as yet they have not entred; but how is it said that they are already cast down into Hell, 2 *Pet.* 2. 4. *ταρταρώσας*; I answer, that expression doth not onely note the dreadfulnes of their fall from

* *Cor.* 13. 12.

so glorious a *Mansion*; to such a place of misery, and because where ever they are, they carry their own Hell with them, though by Gods permission they are as yet suffered to remain in the *Air*, or *Earth*.

4. Departing from Heaven, they departed from all the happiness and glory which they enjoyed there, namely, that *light* which they had in their *Understandings* to behold God, that *Power* in their *wills* to love and serve him, in stead of wick they are filled with *darkness* and *malice*, and become the unreconcilable enemies of God and man; as to their *light*, their *gracious knowledge* is quite extinct, their *natural knowledge* much *Eclipsed*, and their *experimental knowledge* not enough to engage their hearts to God; as to their integrity and holiness, in stead of a will to love and serve God, there are nothing but *obstinate purposes* to do evil, and endeavours to hinder the glory of God, and the good of Man, 1 *Pet.* 5. 8. lest we should enjoy that happiness which he hath left. Hence those titles given them in Scripture, as * *Devil*, which signifieth a *Slanderer*, *Satan*, which signifieth an *Enemy*, the *Tempter*, *Matth* 4. 1. because he dayly solliciteth us to evil; ὁ πονηρὸς, the *evil one*, *Matth.* 5. being full of wickedness himself he maketh it his study and care to propagate it in others, *Belial*, 2 *Cor.* 6. 15. *unprofitable*, as good for nothing, *avvexōn*, the *destroyer*, because he worketh mischief; the *old Serpent*, *Rev.* 12. 6. because under the shape of the Serpent he poisoned *Eve*; as to their *power*, it is much broken and limited, they are held in the chains of Providence, they could not doe hurt to the herd of Swine without permission, *Luk* 9:26.

5. Though they have lost much of the glory and power annexed to their habitation; yet many tokens of the Divine Image do as yet remain in them: *holiness* is (as we said) utterly lost, he sinneth from the beginning, 1 *John* 3. 8. that is, doth nothing else but sin: and *Aquinas* saith well, *Hoc est Angelis casus, quod hominibus mors*, their fall into sin to them, is as death to us: but now in other things they have much left, as Man after his fall is like a *drifted Picture*, and had only enough left to shew what he once was, so the Angels though they are much fallen from the excellency of their nature, yet there is enough left to shew that once they were glorious creatures: that which remaineth may

* *Rev.* 12. 9.

may be referred to two heads, their *great cunning* and *active power*.

1. Their knowledge and cunning is great, they have much *natural* and *experimental knowledge*, so as they can discern hidden causes, and virtues which escape the sight of mans reason and understanding; they know how to apply *active* to *passive things*, can guess notably at *future events*; but as for a certain knowledge of them (unless of such things as depend upon necessary causes) that is proper to God, and accordingly he challengeth it, *Isaiah*, 41. 23. *shew the things that are come, that we may know that ye are Gods, &c.* Therefore the Devils Oracles were either false or doubtful, as *2 Kings* 22: 16. great skill in Arts and Tongues they have as appeareth by their teaching those things with wonderful facility those that have familiarity with them " in divine things, they know enough of God and his Justice, as to feel an horror impressed upon themselves, *James* 2. 19. *Luke* 4. 34. *Acts* 19. 15. Besides they are of *wonderful sagacity* to judge of Mens hearts by the gestures, the motion of the blood and spirits, and other such external signs, for directly they do *not know the thoughts*, that is, the privilege of God.

See my Notes
on *Jam.* 2. 19.

2. *Their power is great still, though limited*; so that it cannot be exercised but *when* and *where*, and *as* God will; they are able to raise Tempests, to bring fire from Heaven, as they did, to ruine *Jobs* house and children, *Job* 1. they can deceive with *lying Miracles*, but *true Miracles* can only be wrought by a *Divine Power*; being of much sagacity and skill in the secrets of Nature, they may poyson the Aire, destroy the bodies of men, infest and trouble Beasts and Cattel; In short; do all that lieth within the compass of a Natural Cause where God permitteth: Again, they may possess the bodies of men, hinder the Godly in the Execution of their Duty; over-rule the spirits of wicked men, and act and stir them up to wrath, lust, filthiness, *Ephes.* 2. 3. besot them with Errour, &c. It would require a distinct Discourse, to open this power to you: they cannot create *new beings*, nor raise *dead bodies*, nor *compel the will of man*; they can do *mira*, but not *miracula*, &c. Let me now come to observe somewhat of Practical Concernment from what hath been spoken.

Practical Observations
thence.

1. That God hath proper places where the *Creatures* shall perform their duty and enjoy their happiness, as the Angels had Heaven which was *ἰδιον αἰωνίου*, their proper place: so Adam had Paradise, and the Saints the Church; 'tis misery enough to be thrown out of that place where God manifesteth himself, he that was cast out of the Church was given up to Satan, 1 Corinthians 5. 5. In the Church Christ ruleth; in the World, Satan; 'tis good to keep to the *Shepherds Tents, Canticles* 1. 8. the Angels left their first estate, at the same time that they lost their own habitation, 'tis dangerous to leave our own place, to be cast out of the Congregations of the Faithful, where God dwelleth and is glorified, *He inhabiteth the praises of Israel, Psalm* 22. 3: that is in the Church where he hath prayse, and we have benefit, the Church is the Gate of Heaven, *Genesis*, 28. 17. where God is, there Heaven is; Cain himself could bewail his misery in being turned out from the Church, he had the whole earth before him, (but saith he) *I shall be hid from thy face, Gen.* 4. 14. that is, I am turned out from the place of thy worship, and where thy name is called upon; 'tis sad to be banished from the Lords gracious presence.

2. Sin depriveth us of Gods presence, this is the Wall of separation between us and God, *Isai* 59. 2. *Your sins have separated,* &c. It not onely provoketh God to stand at a distance from us, but worketh a strangeness in us, and maketh us shie of his Presence, it cast the Angels out of Heaven, Adam out of Paradise, Cain out of the Church: Well then, when you are tempted to folly, bethink with your selves, God could not indure the sight of Angels, when once they were defiled with sinne; if I should yield to this Temptation, I should never indure God, nor he me; This will either cause the Spirit to leave me, or me to leave the Throne of Grace; Guilty Soules cannot sustain the presence of God, and God doth not owne the presence of guilty Sinners. Peter said, *Luke* 5. 8. *Depart from me, for I am a sinful man:* And God saith, *Depart from me into everlasting torments, Matthew*, 25.

3. Observe again, Jude maketh it their act, and Peter Gods act Jude saith, *they left their own habitation,* and Peter, *God cast them down:* and punishments are voluntarily contracted, founded upon

upon some act of ours : God may *pass* by a creature out of his meer will, but he *dameth* not till we provoke him ; first there is a voluntary aversion from God , and then God turneth away from us, *Hosea* 13. 9. *O Israel thou hast destroyed thy self ; our ruine is caused by the free motion of our own wills : God punisheth not willingly , and as delighting in our destruction ; we sin, and so freely depart from our own happiness ; we leave, and then he casteth down.*

4. *God casteth Satan out of Heaven :* Do you imitate your heavenly Father ; cast Satan out of your hearts : Who would entertain him whom Heaven hath spued out ? 'tis said, *Rev.* 12. 8. *That Satan and his Angels found no more place in Heaven ;* Oh then, give him *not* place to dwell in your hearts, *Eph.* 4. 17. *Do not entertain wrathful, or lustful motions : God decreed that the evil Angels should be cast out of Heaven ; and Christ died that they might be cast out of your hearts,* *Job* 12. 21. *Now shall the Prince of this world be cast out :* Oh let him not erect a new Heaven and Empire in your souls ! his great aim is, now he cannot get into Heaven, to dwell in the hearts of men.

5. *Angels, Creatures of the highest excellency are not spared when they sin !* 2 *Pet.* 2. 4. *God spared not the Angels, &c.* wonder at the patience of the great God to us sinners ; if a King be angry with his offending Nobles, should not the skillions tremble ? how come we to be on this side Hell ? Go home and adore that Grace that hath kept you out of the chains of darkness, *Lam.* 3. 23. *It is of the Lords mercy that we are not consumed, not swallowed up quick, not cast down to Hell ; if the Angels in the very Infancy of their Creation were so soon punished for the first offence ; Lord what didst thou see in us, that after so many offences we should be yet alive ? 'tis mercy , pardoning mercy, that giveth us our being ! we fail nor, because our passions fail nor.*

6. *Angels were forced to leave their habitation ;* when they changed their nature, they changed their estate : let all sinners tremble ! consider the instance, and you will see that no dignity and worth of the Creature is of any avail ; nothing can keep off the strokes of vengeance, but the blood of Jesus Christ ; they were *Angels*, glorious Creatures, their sin but *one*, and probably that in *thought* ; yet how dreadful is their punishment ?
cast.

cast out of Heaven, kept in chains of darkness for a severer vengeance ! Oh then, how should we tremble, that have drunk in iniquity like water ? Surely God is the same, he doth no less hate pride, obtrunacy, and contempt of his grace, now, then he did in times past ; *God is but one*, Galathians 3. 20. he acteth according to the same tenour of justice, now, as heretofore, &c.

7. From the word *διωθήσιν*, *their own place* ; Observe, *The true dwelling place and rest is Heaven* ; 'twas the habitation of the Angels, and the rest of the Saints ; Oh, long for your home ! let *your hearts and your hopes* be there ; enter upon your eternal inheritance by degrees : the Angels left their habitations, do you be always travelling thither, let your * *hearts* be in Heaven ; * *your conversations be in Heaven*, ere your persons ; there are good Angels still, blessed companions, Heb. 12. 22, 23. an innumerable company of Angels, and spirits of just men made perfect. An Heathen could say out of the glimpse of a soul's immortality, *O praeclarum illum diem, cum ad illud animarum concilium cœtūque proficiscar*. There you shall see the vacant rooms of the Apostate Angels occupied by the Saints : Say, *wo is me, that my pilgrimage is prolonged*, Psal. 20. 5.

8. *They were cast from Heaven into this world* : do but look upon the world in a right notion ; Satan that was not fit for Heaven, is cast out into the Earth, as a meet place for misery and torment : he is called the *Ruler of the darkness of this world*, Eph. 6. 12. and the *God of this World*, 2 Cor. 4. 4. 'tis punishment enough to the Apostate Angels to be cast out into the World : the World is the *Devils work-house and prison* ; one calleth it *Satans Diocess* ; who would be in love with a place of bondage and punishment ?

2. *The Devil and his Angels are in the World*, let us be the more cautious ; he *compasseth the Earth to and fro* : no place can secure you from his temptation, he is every where ravening for the prey, with an indefatigable and unwearied diligence, 1 Pet. 5. 8. Let us look about us, *Wo to the Inhabitants of the Earth and Sea, for the Devil is come down to you*, Rev. 12. 12. Where ever you are, Satan is neer you, the World is full of Devils ; when you are in the *Shop*, the Devil is there, to fill your hearts with *lying and deceit*, as he did the heart of *Ananias*,
Athe

* Col. 3. 1.

* Phil. 3. 20.

Alt. 5. When you are in your *Closets*; and when you have shut the door upon you, you do not shut out Satan, he can taint a secret duty; when you are in the house of God, *Ministring before the Lord*, Satan is at your right hand, ready to resist you, *Lach. 3. 1.* He is ready either to pervert your aims, or to divert your thoughts; We had need keep the heart in an humble, watchful, praying frame: God hath cast out the Angels out of Heaven, and now they are here upon earth, tempting the sons of men to folly and inconvenience: be watchful, the world is the Devils Chess-board; you can hardly move back or forth, but he is ready to attach you by some temptation.

10. *When grace is abused, our dejection is usually according to the degree of our exaltation*; the Angels from Heaven are cast down to Hell; the highest in the rank of creatures are now made lowest; corruptions of the best things are most noysome; *Thou Capernaum which art exalted to Heaven, art now brought down to Hell, Matth. 11. 23.* 'Twas one of the chiefest Cities of *Galilee*, and where our Saviour usually conversed; 'tis a kind of Heaven to enjoy Christ in the Ordinances; but now to sleight this mercy will bring such confusions and miseries as are a kind of Hell to you; sleighting of grace (of all sins) weigheth heaviest in Gods ballance.

11. *Spiritual judgments are most severe*; and to be given up to an obstinacy in sin, is the sorest judgment; 'tis diabolical to continue in sin; the Angels left their habitation, and what followed? they lost their holiness.

12. *Loss of happiness is a great judgment*; 'tis Hell enough to want God: the first part of the sentence, *depart from me, Matth. 25. 41.* is most dreadful; loss of Heaven is the first part of the Angels punishment; we in effect say now, *depart from us, Job 21. 14.* but God will then say, *depart from me*; ye shall see my face no more, &c.

Thus we have dispatched the first part of the Angels punishment, *their loss*; we now come to the other part, their *pains*, *sensus*, their punishment of sense, or pain; [he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness] where there is an allusion to the state of Malefactors or condemned men, who are kept in prison till execution: now the evils of a prison are two. 1. *The darkness of the place.* 2. *The hard usage of the evil doer*; suitably

tably to which the Apostle used a double notion.

1. *They are reserved in everlasting chains.*

2. *Under darkness.*

1. I Begin with the first part, [*In everlasting chains.*] Whence two Notes, 1. *That the Angels are kept in chains.* 2. *That those chains are everlasting.*

1. *They are kept in chains.* But what chains can hold Angels? Can Spirits be bound with Irons? *I Answer.* I Answer, They are all spiritual chains, suitable to the spiritual nature of Angels: such as these, 1. *Guilt of conscience*, which bindeth them over to judgment; the consciences of wicked Angels know that they are adjudged to damnation for their sin; this is a sure chain; for it fasteneth the judgment so as you cannot shake it off; 'tis bound and tied upon us by the hand of Gods justice. The condition of a guilty sinner is frequently compared to a prisoner, *Isaiah 42. 7. Isaiah 49. 9. Isaiah 61. 1.* and sin to a prison wherein we are shut up, *Romans 11. 32. Galatians 3. 22.* and guilt to chains or bonds laid upon us by God the Judge, *Prov. 5. 22. Lam. 1. 14.*

5. *Their obstinacy in sinning:* They are fallen so as they cannot rise again; they are called *wickednesses*, as sinning with much malice and obstinacy; as if you should say, *wickedness is self*; the Devils sin is as the *sin against the Holy Ghost*; a malicious, obstinate, spiteful opposition against the Kingdom of Christ: such an hatred against God and Christ, that they will not repent and be saved; their *despair* begetteth *despight*, and being *hopeless of relief*, are without *purpose of repentance*: thus do foolish creatures, add sin to sin, and harden themselves in an evil way, which is as a chain to hold them in *Gods Prison*, till their final damnation; see *2 Thes. 2. 11, 12.* Where *error and wilful persisting in disobedience*, is made to be Gods prison, wherein *reprobate creatures* are held till their punishment be consummate.

3. *Utter despair of deliverance;* they are held under their torment by their own thoughts; as a distressed conscience is said to be bound, *Isa. 65. 1.* to them there remaineth nothing but a *certain awful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation*, *Heb 10. 27.* Release they cannot look for, more judgment they do expect, *Matth. 8. 31. Art thou come to torment us before*

our time; their prison door is locked with Gods own Key, and as long as God sitteth upon the Throne they cannot wrest the Key out of his hands.

4. Gods power and providence, by which the Angelical strength is bridled and over-mastered, so as they cannot do what they would; thus Rev. 20. 2. Satan is said to be bound up for a thousand years; that is, in the chains of Gods power, which are sometimes straighter, and sometimes looser: the Devil was fain to ask leave to enter into the herd of Swine, *Matthew* 8.

5. The chains of Gods eternal decree. As there is a golden chain, the chain of Salvation, which is carried on from link to link, till the purposes of eternal grace do end in the possession of eternal glory; so there is an Iron chain of reprobation, which begins in Gods own voluntary preterition, and is carried on in the creatures voluntary Apostacy, and endeth in their just damnation; and when once we are shut up under these bars, there is no opening, *Job* 12. 14.

Secondly, These chains are eternal chains, because the wicked Angels stand guilty for ever, without hope of recovery or redemption. Every natural man is in chains, but there is hope to many of the prisoners: Christ saith, go forth; but those chains upon the evil Angels are for ever and ever; now *ad custodiam*, to keep them and hold them in their lost estate; hereafter *ad poenam*, they are continued upon them as a part of their final punishment; when much of the liberty which now they have, shall be abridged.

From hence observe these practical Inferences.

1. That sins are as it were bonds and chains: a wicked man is in bondage here and here for; now in snares, and then in chains; here taken captive by Satan in his snares, *2 Tim.* 2. 26. and hereafter bound up with him in chains. Sin it self is a bondage, and Hell a prison: were there nothing in sin but the present slavery; 'tis enough to dissuade us; but alas this is not all, there are not only snares, but chains: in the fall of the Angels, how many notions are there offered to us to discover the evil of sin? they left their beginning, and lost their habitation, and then chains of darkness: he that hath a mind to be a beast, or a devil, let him be a sinner. If you mean to quench

See my Notes
on James 1. 25.

your reason, to eclipse the glory of your Creation, to disturb the quiet of your spirits, and instead of calmness and serenity of conscience, to bring in horror and confusion; if you mean to enthral and captivate your souls to every base affection, and to be at the command of every corrupt desire, then go on freely as you do in sinning against God; but alas the present thralldom is nothing to what is future, all the sins that you commit will be as so many Chains, binding you over to an eternal and just damnation. The good Angels are at liberty to serve God, when the evil Angels are shut up in the prison of their own obstinacy and wickedness: remember this when you are convinced of a sin which you cannot leave, and fear lest it prove a chain of everlasting darkness.

Secondly, *those chains and bonds can never be broken by us; the Angels cannot break them themselves, and Christ will not, for their day of grace is past; every ones chains would be eternal, if Christ did not loose them, and open the prison door to poor Captives, Isa. 61. 1. this is our advantage above the Angels, that an year of liberty is proclaimed to us, and an opening of the prison to them that are bound; Christ himself was bound with our chains; the Prophet saith, Isa. 53. 8. he was taken from prison, and from judgement; he was in prison that we might go free: If the Judge had given us up to the Officer, and the Officer had cast us into prison, how long would it have been, ere we had paid the utmost farthing, Luk. 12. 58. others that reject the mercy offered in Christ, can never wrest themselves out of the hands of justice, but do for ever remain under the power and wrath of the living God, Heb. 10. 20.*

Thirdly, *The Devil is in chains; a cruel spirit, but under bonds: his power is less then his will and malice; he is wrathful, that we may not be secure; he is chained, that we may not despair: he hath no power, but what is given him from above, and when God putteth any of his servants into Sathans hands, he keepeth Sathan in his own hands: if you be in Sathans hands for your exercise, remember Sathan is in Gods hands for your comfort and safety: He had not power over the herd of Swine without leave, Matth. 8. 31. suffer me, &c. 10 Luke 22. 31. he could not sift Peter till he had a commission, Sathan hath desired, &c. John 1. 12. Job 2. 7. Sathan could not*

10 much as touch *Jobs* estate or skin till leave obtained, nay he could not deceive *Ahab* a wicked man, till God said *Go, 1 King. 22. 21, 22.* he is but Gods executioner, he sent his evil Angels among them, *Psal. 78. 49.* God gave commission for the plagues of *Egypt*, and then the evil Angels had power to execute them: the godly need not fear *Sathan*, as a disobedient Angel, he is cast into the chains of Gods justice and power; and as head of the Kingdom of darkness, his power is more restrained by the death of Christ, *John 12. 29.*

Fourthly, Observe how weak the Creatures are, when God marcheth in judgement against them: guilt of conscience is one of the fallen Angels chains, if God will but arm our own thoughts against us, he needeth not bring forces from without, there is enough in that to sink us into Hell: The Law needeth not bring Brimstone from Heaven to burn sinners, nor open the mouth of the great deep to drown them, nor shatter the frame of nature about our heads; alas, we cannot bear up under the burden of our own consciences, or the weight of our own grief, when he layeth his finger upon the conscience, who can bear it? The Angels excell in strength, and yet the impressions of horreur laid upon them are too hard for them to grapple withal, *Prov. 18. 14. a wounded spirit who can bear?* as if he had said, I challenge all the world to bring me a man that is able to deal with his own conscience when God armeth it against him.

Fifthly, That spiritual judgements of all others are most severe, to have sin punished with obstinacy and hardness in sinning. This is nothing but to have the Devils chains laid upon us, a sad intimation, that we are given up to chains of darkness; frogs and lice, and hail-stones were but soft judgements to *Pharaoh's hard heart*: unless God should send us quick into Hell, there cannot an heavier judgement befall us, nay certainly it were better to be given up to Hell torments, if there could be any expectation of deliverance, then to be given up to a spirit of sinning; for there is no end of that; say then, Lord, whatever judgement thou bringest upon me, bring not thy heavy judgement of an hard heart; 'tis better by far that you should live miserably, then sin freely without remorse: But what sins bring on this spiritual judgement? I answer,

1. *An unthankful abuse of Gods gifts*, The Devils had a glorious and excellent nature, but they were not thankful; observe it when you will, you will find it true, that no man was ever punished with hardness of heart, but some former merciful dispensation was abused: the Heathens were not thankful for the light of nature, and therefore God gave them up to vile affections, *Rom. 1 22, 24.* Others received not the love of the truth, and therefore God gave them up to believe a lye, that they might be damned, *2 Thess. 2 11, 12.* the very sin against the Holy Ghost is so called, because 'tis a despighting grace received, or a Devillish opposing of the Grace and Supernaturall work of the Spirit, by which the mind is convinced of the Truth.

2. *Sinning against the light*, that was Sathans sin, who was full of light, and sinned in the very face of God, and 'tis his sin still, malice having only put out the *light of Prudence*, but not of his *Understanding*, so that he knowingly sinneth; so wicked men **imprison the Truth in unrighteousness*, and then God giveth them up to the sway of their own lusts and passions: there is more of malice in sins against light; you laugh at Christ before his face, out-dare Heaven and Conscience; † *will he force the Queen before my face, &c.*

* *Rom. 4 8.*

† *Esther. 7 8.*

3. *Sinning with the light*, When malice sets wit a work (as it doth in the Devils) against God and the Church: 'tis Satanical to do evil, to make no other use of our parts then to plot wickedness, pervert the Truth, and undermine Religion, *Jer. 4 22.* *They are wise to do evil, but to do good they have no knowledge*: when you make Religion yield to policy, or bend policy to ruine Religion, then your *Wisedome hath undone you, Isai, 48.*

4. *Malice against God and goodness*, This is Sathans direct sin, when men will not only be wicked themselves, but adversaries and malicious opposers of all that is good: This is not only to be sinners, but Sathans, *Acts 13 10.* *O thou child of the Devil, and enemy of all goodness*; Cain that hated his brother, because his works were righteous, was the Devils Patriarch.

5. *A foolish obstinacy and wilfulness*, When will and humour is lifted up against conviction, *Jer. 2 25.* *Jer. 44 18.* they will not, because they will not; foolish wilfulness meeteth with pen-
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nal hardnes; he that will wink shall not see the Sun, shine it never so brightly: Such men do but lay Sathans chains on their own Will and Understanding.

6. *A senseless security*, notwithstanding the growth and increase of sin, when men lose all feeling and restraint, and grow more wicked, but less tender, Ephes. 4. 19. and so men sin freely, foully, wax worse and worse, and adde new links to the chains of darkness:

Sixth'y, *There is little reason that we should adore him whom God holdeth in chains of darkness, that we should exalt him whom the Lord hath cast down, and make a God of him who hath made himself a Devil.* All sins do, as it were, set the Crown upon Sathans head, these especially.

1. *False Worship*, Sathan is the Head of Idolaters; if the sacrifice were offered in an unbecoming manner, God saith, it was a sacrifice offered unto Devils, *Levit. 17. 7.* In all false worships the Devil is served either directly, or obliquely, either by consequence, or in the intention of the worshippers; hence those expressions, *Table of Devils*, 1 Cor. 10. 21. they sacrificed to Devils and not to God, *Deut. 32. 17.* You gratifie Satan if you be not right in worship; those among Christians that worshipped towards an Idol of Gold and Silver, are said to worship Devils, *Rev. 9. 20.* Sathan is (saith *Synefimus*) ἰδωλοχάρις, a lover of Images, and a Patron of false worship.

2. *Worldly Conversation*; he is called the God of this World, 2 Cor. 2. 4. sensual, covetous, proud men are *Sathans* Votaries, at his beck and pleasure, and will you be one of the number? when Christ came to dissolve Sathans works, *John 3. 8.* will you uphold them?

3. *Base fear of wicked men*; you doe but fear the Devil in them, *Rev. 2. 10.* Fear not, behold the Devil shall cast some of you into prison, He that will deny the Truth for fear of men, preferreth the Devil before God.

4. *Being of the faction of the wicked*, there is a corrupt party in the world, over whom Sathan usurpeth Empire and Domination; *Rulers of the darkness of this world*, Eph. 6. 14. Col. 1. 13. cry not up a confederacy with these, take heed how your soul entrencheth into that secret. I confess 'tis ingeniousness, a matter of Christian skill and art, to find out the snare, that we may escape

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it: Generally they are the *Antichristian dark part* of the world, such as are led with a blind zeal and rage to oppose the interest of righteousness; such as oppose the Gospel with rage and lies, *John 8 44. Ye are of your father the Devil, and his lusts will ye do.* Many that deny Satan, yet may be of his Faction and Party.

We are now come to the second part of the punishment of pain taken from the other inconvenience of a prison [*ὕπὸ ζόρῳ, under darknes*] in allusion to Malefactors, who are cast into Dungeons, where besides the *load of Irons*, the very *darknes* of the place concurrerh to their misery; light is pleasant, as giving us the sight of what is grateful in the world; of which when we are deprived, the mind like a Mill falleth and worketh upon it self. *Peter* saith [*in chains of darknes*] as implying, that God did bind them fast with their *darknes* and *horror*, as with a chain, but our Apostle here seemeth to make them two distinct parts of their torment, as certainly it is a more full description of it. Well then the proposition will be, *That the Apostate Angels are kept under darknes.*

Observat.

Darknes in Scripture representeth three things; First, *Ignorance*, secondly, *Sin*, thirdly *misery*; as *light*, the contrary quality, implyeth *Knowledge*, *Holiness*, and *Happiness*, because *light* discovereth all things; 'tis put for *knowledge*, because of all bodily qualities, 'tis most pure and unmixed, therefore 'tis put for *holiness*, because 'tis wonderfully pleasing and delightful to sense; therefore 'tis put for *glory*: so contrariwise *darknes*, which is nothing else, but the absence and privation of light, signifieth *Ignorance*, *Rom. 2. 19. Sin*, *1 Pet. 2 9. Misery*, *Psal. 107. 11.* Now all these three make way for one another, *Ignorance* for *Sin*, and *Sin* for *Misery*, the Understanding being the great wheel of the Soul, if it be not right, *Matth. 6. 22.* ignorance maketh us stumble upon sin, and by sin we fall into the pit of everlasting darknes.

If you ask what kind of *Darknes* is intended here? I answer, though all may be implied; yet chiefly the darknes of misery is here intended, they being cast down from the *light* and *glory* of the highest Heavens, into dark and obscure habitations, where they want the sight of God, and the light of his Countenance; as when the Sun is gone, there is nothing but darknes in
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the world; so being banished out of the presence of God, they are fitly said to be held under darkness; for as the Sun is to the corporeal world, so is God to the world of Spirits, *Psal.* 4. 6. now their Sun is Eclipsed, and by the interposition of the dark Cloud of their sin and obstinacy they cannot have the least comfortable glimpse and fruition of God; to which also may be added, the horrible apprehension of their loss, and that terror and discomfort that lyeth upon them, for they have only so much light left, as serveth to increase their torment; I confesse 'tis disputed by Divines, whether the Devils can grieve for the loss of the light of Gods Countenance, or the want of the *beatific vision*; and the ground of doubting is, because there is in the Devils an extreme averseness, enmity and hatred of God and his Glory; but certain, as they are rational Creatures, they cannot but be sensible of their loss, as also the damned spirits are; and so great a loss of happiness, for that is the consideration under which they are sensible of it,) must needs breed horror and torment; they do not mourne for the absence of God as the Saints do out of a principle of holiness, and because God is lovely in himself, but as profitable to them; and this sense 'tis accompanied with despair, so with blasphemy and hatred of God; surely every part of the sentence that is pronounced upon wicked men, is fitted to beget terror in them, and therefore depart from me, is apprehended as a misery, as well as go into everlasting torments. Adde further to their darkness that despair that is upon them, and [fearful looking for of the fiery indignation of the Lord; which desperate sorrow is expressed by utter darkness, and gnashing of teeth, *Matth.* 22. 13.

Let me now come to some Observation.

1. *Darkness is the Devils punishment*, the highest misery of the highest rank of reasonable Creatures. Oh, why should we love that which is the misery of the fallen Angels! as our Saviour speaketh of some that love darkness rather than light, *John* 3. 19. that is, error rather than truth; lusts rather than Christ; Ignorance rather than Knowledge. 'Tis one of the saddest Arguments of mans dreadful Fall, that he is in love with his own misery, we should hate sinne, and we hate the Light that reproveth it: ignorant people love a foolish Mystery, Gods

Gods faithful witnesses are their torment, *Rev. 11. 10.* the carnal world would lain lye down upon the bed of ease and sleep, light is troublesome, those that let them alone are their Ido's and darlings, *the blind lead the blind, and both fall into the ditch*; 'tis evil not to know the will of God, 'tis doubly evil when we desire not to know; the one sort erre in their minds, the other in their hearts: spiritual darkness is far worse then bodily; when *Elymas* was stricken blind he desired some body to lead him by the hand, *Acts 13. 11.* In such a case we count it our happiness to light upon fit guides; in spiritual darkness 'tis quite otherwise, we cannot endure a faithful guide; the Prophets prophesie lyes, and the people love to have it so; a blind people are all for blind guides.

2. *Light that yieldeth us no comfort is but darkness*; Sathan hath knowledge left, but no comfort, *Jam. 2. 19.* they believe and tremble; the more sense they have of Gods being and glory, the greater horror have they upon their spirits: 'tis very miserable when we have only light enough to awaken conscience, and knowledge enough to be self-condemned. To know God but not to enjoy him, that's the Devils punishment; Oh then never leave till your thoughts of God are sweet and comfortable, *Psal. 104. 34.* Sathan cannot but abominate his own thoughts of God; for he cannot think of him without torment; but 'tis otherwise with gracious hearts; that meditation which is the Devils terrour, is their solace and support; Gods name to them is as an ointment poured out, *Cant. 1. 3.* full of fragrancy and reviving: rest not then till you can see God with such a light as giveth you fruition and comfortable enjoyment of him; *in thy light shall we see light, Psal. 36. 9.* there is light in thy light, but all other light is but darkness.

3. *Do but observe the difference between God and Sathan.* God is light, *1 John 1. 5.* and Sathan darkness; God dwelleth in light, and Sathan is reserved in chains under darkness; the first creature that God made in the world was light, and the first gift of the spirit is illumination; but now all Satans aim and work is to bring in darkness, to blind the mind, *1 Cor. 4. 4.* ignorance is the very foundation of his kingdom, *Eph. 6. 12.* Well then, the more dark, the more like Satan, a Child of God is a Child of light, and what have we to do with works of darkness, *Eph. 5. 11.* there

there should be such a contrariety between you and sin, as there is between God and Satan; say then these actions would only become my night of ignorance and folly; *night work* is unseemly for the day, *Rom. 13. 12. The day is at hand, let us cast off the works of darkness*; leave these things to the *Bats* and the *Owls*; if there be a difference and contrariety between *Christ* and *Belial*, who are the chiefs of either state, so between the persons that herd under them; *What communion is there between Christ and Belial, between light and darkness, 2 Cor. 6. 14.*

4. *So much darkness as remaineth in you, so much advantage hath Satan against you.* The dark part of the world is the seat of his Empire; *Rulers of the darkness of this world, Eph. 6. 12.* His subjects are the *children of darkness*; and all the advantage that he hath over the children of Light, is, because of the darkness that is in them: whosoever therefore lyeth under a state of darkness, is under the power of Satan. The great work of the Ministry, is, to recover them, *to turn them from darkness to light, Acts 26. 18. and so from Satan to God*: Oh the sad condition of such persons that are bound together with Satan in *chains of darkness*! Poor Creatures, how are they hurried to and fro? from Wrath to Pride; from Pride to Lust; from Lust to Filthiness; from Filthiness to Worldliness: Oh then! *awake you that sleep, and the Lord shall give you light. Eph. 5. 14.* What a blessing is it, when it can be said of us, what the Apostle said of the *Ephesians, ye were darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord, Eph. 5. 8.* As soon as you have received light and grace, you are translated out of Satans Power and Kingdom, and put into the Lords.

5. *The darkness of sin is punished with the darkness of misery.* The light whereby we are directed and perfected is the same; the state of grace is a *marvellous light*, *1 Pet. 2. 9.* and the state of glory the *inheritance of the Saints in light*, *Col. 1. 12.* So sin is but *darkness begun*. Hell is called *utter darkness*, *Mat. 8. 12.* τὸ σκότος τὸ ἰσχυρόν, a darkness beyond a darkness; as *Augustine* glosseth in his Homilies, *Intenebras ex tenebris infalci-ent exclusi*; the damned are but thrust out of one darkness into another; from ignorance to sin; from sin to torment: 'tis very observable, when *Solomon* compareth the way of the just and the way of the wicked, he compareth the one to *light*, the other

to darkness, Prov. 4: 18, 19. *The way of the just is as the shining light that shineth more and more unto the perfect day ; and the way of the wicked is as darkness.* By the rule of contraries, as one is a growing light, so the other is an *encreasing darkness*: from twy-light to star-light, from star-light to thick darkness: they quench the light of nature ; chuse worldly happiness ; grow regardless of eternity ; are hardened in their way, and at length given up to everlasting horror and confusion of faces, to whom the mist of darkness is reserved for ever, 2 Pet. 2: 18. *Mists of error* are justly punished with *mists of darkness*: The men there spoken of were clouds and mists in the Church ; and therefore the mists of eternal darkness are kept for them, as a fit and proper portion.

6. *The danger of refusing and abusing light.* Those that were *Angels of light*, are now held in the chains of darkness: see it every where made good; the blackest evening hath been sent usually after a glorious day ; those that once enjoyed *Noahs* preaching, were afterward *the spirits in prison*, 1 Pet. 3: 18, 19. He that had not a *Wedding Garment* on for the feast, was cast into *utter darkness*, Mat. 22: 13. Abuse of light, and means, and privileges, will surely make our condition gloomy and uncomfortable.

7. *When we are cast out from God, nothing but darkness ensueth ; utter darkness, and weeping and gnashing of teeth.* 'Tis our utmost happiness to enjoy God, and 'tis our utmost misery to want him ; the Devils know it, and we shall one day know it: pray for the *light of Gods countenance more than for Corn, and Wine, and Oyl*, Psal. 4: 6. One glimpse of the favour of God would turn *Hell into Heaven*, and give us such a strong and sweet joy, as would swallow up all kind of sorrows ; 'tis the absence of the Sun maketh night ; certainly they have hard hearts that do not mourn when they have lost the light of God: *When the Bridegroom is gone, then shall they mourn*, Matth. 9: 15. Alas, how the drooping hearts and withered face of Nature seem to mourn for the absence of the Sun ? and how are all things cleared and revived at Spring again ? and shall not we mourn for God, the Sun of the intellectual world ? *Pharaoh* was most affrighted with the *Plague of Darkness*, Exodus 10: 4. Yea, the Devils themselves are sensible of the loss of the light.

light of Gods countenance : when God shutteth up himself in a cloud, let our bowels be troubled for him, *Lament.* 3. 44.

8. *The World in comparison of Heaven is but a dark place :* 'Tis the place where the Devils are cast ; and they are held under darkness. 'Tis an obscure corner of the Creation ; a place fit for our *tryal*, but not for our *reward* : in a spiritual consideration 'tis but a *great and vast dungeon*, where we cannot have so clear sight of God as elsewhere. 'Tis *Satans walk* ; a place of danger and defilement : 'tis much if we can keep our selves unspotted in such a nasty hole, *James* 1. 27. *2 Pet.* 2. 18. The inheritance which is given to the Saints is given to them *in light* ; Let us look for that, and long for that ; and *God dwelleth in light*, *1 Tim.* 6. 16. he dwelleth there where he discovereth most of his glory, and that's in Heaven.

We have done with the *present punishment* of the Angels ; we come now to that which is future, implied in those words, [*unto the judgment of the great day* ;] by *judgment* is meant the sentence of condemnation which shall pass upon them, before the eyes of the whole world ; and then the consequents, which are eternal misery and torment.

Observ. *That at the day of judgment the punishment of the Devils will be greater then now it is.* Observand

The Devils punishment is for the present great, as you have heard ; but they are in expectation of greater, *Matth.* 8. 31. *Art thou come to torment us before our time ?* There is a time coming, when the wrath of God shall be increased upon them ; and this time is the day of judgment, the great day of the Lord, when they shall be brought forth before the Tribunal of Christ and his Saints : the good Angels shall come as *Christs companions*, and the evil Angels as his prisoners : See *Matth.* 25. 31. and *2 Thess.* 1. 7. and *1 Cor.* 6. 3. This is a day that will work upon their envy ; thwart their pride ; to see the glory of Christ ; and of the good Angels, and the Saints : after this they shall be adjudged to horrible torments. Hell is their Free-hold and Portion, *prepared for the Devil and his Angels*, *Matth.* 25. 41. The Quality and Nature of their torment we cannot so easily determine, nor what that fire that shall burn spirits ; only the Scripture sheweth they are cast *into the Lake* *Revel.* 20. 10.

that burneth with Fire and Brimstone, where they shall suffer torments without end, and without ease. When Heavens joyes are full, then are Hell torments full also: and therefore though for the present they are under Gods wrath, yet they do not taste the dregs of it; he exerciseth some patience towards them; they have an *Empire* and a *Ministry* in the world; but when all former things are done away, and Christs glory is fully shewn to the world, then will he take full vengeance of his enemies. Well then, from hence Learn.

1. *That the wickeds judgment is not as yet full.* At the great day, then shall it be more encreased, upon the Union of Body and Soul; they shall drink the dregs of the *Cup of wrath unmixed*. In this life we are adding sin to sin, and in the next God will be adding torment to torment; Oh what a sad train of judgments followeth a sinner! for the present he hath Hell in his own conscience; they sip of the cup of wrath in the bondage and horrors now upon them; and at death these are more revived, and made more lively and active: but consider, after all this there is worse behind; torments insufferable, presently upon the separation, for then they are in *prison*, 1 *Pet.* 3. 9. detained in a fearful expectation of further judgment, *Luke* 16. 14. *I am horribly tormented in this flame*; but after this, at Christs coming to judgment, these torments are encreased; and therefore the Apostle speaketh as if he did not take vengeance before, 2 *Thess.* 1. 7. *He shall come in flaming fire to render vengeance, &c.* Because then 'tis fully executed; do not adde drunkenness to thirst, lest God adde to your plagues.

2. *The most miserable Creatures are suffered to enjoy some degree of Gods patience.* For the present God is patient, as to the fallen Angels; sure I am to sinning man; in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt dye: the full execution of that sentence is put off to the day of judgement; Reprobates are endured with much long-suffering, *Romans* 9. 22. *Intermissions* God gives in this life; respite to bodies till the last day: adore his goodness, do not abuse it.

3. *Origen's charity was too large*, who dreamed of *xadagion wē*, a flaming River, through which all creatures were to pass, and so to be purged, and then at length to be saved, even the

the Devils themselves, whereas they are kept for a severer judgement.

4. When you see wicked men endured, and not presently cast into Hell, be not astonished, God hath a Ministry for them as for the evil Angels: *Some are reserved to the day of judgement*, 2 Pet. 2. 9. that is, their punishment respite for the greater triumph of that day.

5. *One judgement may make way for another*, the chains of darkness for the judgement of the great day. Let no man please himself, in that he suffereth afflictions in this world, these may be but the beginnings of sorrow; God is terrible to poor sinners as well as rich; you may be miserable here, and yet not escape in the world to come: do not think the worst is past, some have a double Hell, such miseries here as are pledges of everlasting torments hereafter.

6. *Devils fear the great day*. An Atheistical loose Christian is worse then *Sathan*, he scoffeth at that at which the Devil trembleth. There are *Atheists* in the Church, but there are none in Hell.

7. *Angels are brought to judgement*. None are exempted, at the great day you shall see those glorious Creatures bound with chains of Darkness; the *Kings* and *Captains* are brought in trembling before the *Lambs Throne*, Rev. 6. 20. and great as we I as small appear before that great Tribunal, Rev. 20. 12.

8. *The Angels are plunged into the depth of Hell, when Saints enter into their Masters joy*: God loveth a returning sinner, before an *Apostate Angel*.

There is one point yet behind, with which I shall conclude this verse; and that is, *That the day of judgement is a great day*. *Observation*. 'Tis so in many regards.

1. Because 'tis the consummate Act of Christs regal Office. *Reas. 1.* Of all Offices Christs Kingly Office is the most eminent: now the Kingly Office was never discovered with so much lustre and glory to the world as then: the eminent act of other Offices do more belong to his abasement; as his *Oblation*, an eminent act of his *Priestly Office*, was to be performed upon earth; so his *Prophetical Office* was much discharged in delivering the Doctrine of the Gospel whilest he was here; but of his Kingly Office we had but a very little glimpse, during his abode upon earth,

earth, in his whipping the buyers and sellers out of the Temple, and his entrance into *Jerusalem*, when they cried *Hosanna* in the streets, *Matth. 21*. And now in Heaven Christ is supream, but his sovereignty lyeth under a cloud and vail. *All things are put under him*. But carnal sense objects, *We see not as yet all things put under him*, *Heb. 2.8*. But at the last day Christ will shew himself to be King indeed, both in rewarding his friends, and in an absolute conquest over his Enemies, which are the two great parts of his Regal Office: therefore the day of judgement is called *ἡμέρα κριτικῆς*, the day of the Lord, *2 Pet. 3. 10*. as being the day wherein Christ shall manifest himself to be a Lord indeed. First, in rewarding his friends. When *David* was Crowned at *Hebron*, then all that followed him in the wilderness were rewarded according to the merit of their place and service; before they had hard service, and little wages, but then were made Captains of thousands, and Captains of hundred, and Captains of fifties. So they that are true to the interest of Christ may meet with many a frown and hard entertainment in the world, but you will not repent of it in the day of Christs Royalty, *Matth. 25. 34*. Then shall the King say, &c. He is called the Son of man before; but then you will find him a King rewarding all his subjects. *Peter* was troubled about his petty losses, *Master* (saith he) *we have forsaken all and followed thee*; what had *Peter* to forsake? A Net? a Cottage? a Fishing Boat? A great All! We are apt to think much of what we part with upon Christs score; if we suffer but a disgraceful word, a small inconvenience, a frown, we presently say, *what shall we have therefore*? But we need not seek any other pay-Master then Christ, he will not be behind with us when the day of payment cometh. See *Matth. 19. 27, 28*. ἐν παλαγγασίᾳ, *In the regeneration ye shall sit with me on thrones of glory*, &c. that is, at the day of judgement, which is the great regeneration, when Heavens are new, Earth new, Bodies new, Souls new, all is new, then we shall be no losers by Christ.

2. In an absolute conquest over his enemies; the stoutest faces shall then gather blackness, and the stiffest knees bow to him: There is an expression, *Isa. 45. 23*. *I have sworn by my self, and the words shall not return*, that to me every knee shall bow,

bow, and every mouth shall swear. Now this expression doth concern Christs sovereignty and full victory over his enemies; for this Scripture is twice alluded unto in the New Testament, and in both places applyed to Christ. The first place that I shall take notice of, is *Phil. 2. 10.* where the Apostle saith, *That to Christ every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall call him Lord;* which is the same with that which is spoken in the Prophet, and is there made to be the first step of *Christs Ascension*, when he was solemnly inaugurated into the Kingly Office; but the Prophecie receiveth not its full and final accomplishment till the day of judgement; to which purpose the same Scripture is cited by the Apostle, *Rom. 14. 10. We shall all stand before the judgement-seat of Christ: For 'tis written, As I live saith the Lord, to me every knee shall bow, and mouth shall confess.* So that the *bowing of knees*, or stooping of enemies is not fully accomplished till then. Christ doth now often over-rule the counsels and projects of his enemies, and smite them with a fore destruction; but there is not such crouching and trembling, so sensibly now to be discerned, as there will be at that day.

Secondly, the day of judgement is a great day, because great things are then done, which will appear if you consider the preparations for that day. 2. *The day it self.* 3. *The consequence of it.* *Reas. 2.*

1. *The preparations for Christs approach, the Scripture mentioneth two, 1. The Arch-Angels trumpet. 2. The sign of the Son of Man.*

1. There is that great noise and terrour of the voice of the Lord, which is to be managed by some special Angel, by which all the world shall be, as it were, summoned to appear before Christs Tribunal: See *1 Thess. 4. 16.* and *Matth. 24. 31.* Some expound this Trumpet *Analogically*, some *Literally*: they that expound it *Analogically*, think it signifieth the power and virtue of Christ forcing all the world to appear before his judgement-seat, which is therefore called *a trumpet*, because the solemn Assemblies among the Jews were summoned by sound of Trumpet; but why may we not take it *Literally*, and in propriety of speech, for the audible sound of a Trumpet? Sure I am at the giving of the

the Law the voice of the Trumpet was exceeding loud; and the like may be, when he cometh to take an account of our keeping the Law, a sound of a Trumpet, as a terrible summons to all the world, and a near sign of Christs approach: As *John Baptist* was the fore-runner of his first coming, who was the voice of one crying in the wilderness; So is the *Arch-Angel* at his second coming; a terrible blast there shall be, such as shall be heard all the world over, startling the dead out of their graves; men do not hear the voice of God now; for now he speaketh by his Angels or Messengers in a still voice: but then all the dead shall hear and live.

2. The sign of the Son of Man, spoken of *Matth. 24. 30.* what it is we cannot certainly tell, till experience manifest it; some think a *strange Star*, as at his first coming the wise men were conducted to him by a Star; others the sign of the Cross, as being Christs badge, by which he is known in the world; for the great subject of the Gospel is *Christ crucified*, called therefore the *Word of the Cross*; and this they think shall appear in the Heavens, as it did to *Constantine* when he went to fight against *Maxentius*, with this word, *in xpo vinces*, by this shalt thou overcome; though by the way *Eusebius* describeth that vision as in the figure of χ , the first critical letter of Christs name: This way go many of the Ancients, making the Cross to be Christs Ensign and Royal Banner which he will display in the Heavens; as Kings, when they make their triumphant approach, have their Banners carried before them. But I dare not thus dogmatize: others more probably interpret it of some fore-running beams of Majesty and Glory (like those streaks of light before the Sun be risen) which shall darken the great luminaries of the world, and strike a terrour into the hearts of men, as *Paul* was stricken with such a terrour at the sight of Christ, *Acts 26. 13.* He saw light from heaven, above the brightness of the Sun, shining round about him: notable it is, that these fore-running beams of Christs Majesty and Glory are sometimes expressed by light, and sometimes by fire; by light to express the comfortableness of it to the Gooly, as the light of the Sun doth not scorch but revive and refresh: by fire, 2 *Thessal. 1. 8.* *in igne et oleo*, to show the

the dreadfulneſs of it to the wicked, to them 'tis as *flames* and *devouring burnings*.

2. Let us conſider the day it ſelf, and the great things done therein; 'tis a *day of Congregation* of all mankind; there *Adam* may ſee all his poſterity at once; but eſpecially is it a day of *Congregation*, in reſpect of the Saints who are now ſcattered in divers Countries, Towns, Houſes, where God hath any work and ſervice for them; but then ſhall meet together in one *Assembly* and *Rendezvous*, *Pſal. 1. 6.* called the *great Congregation of the juſt*; as the wicked ſhall be herded together like ſtraws and ſticks bound in a bundle, to ſet one another on fire; Drunkards together, and Adulterers together; *They ſhall be bound in bundles, &c. Matth. 13. 41.* and ſo increaſe one anothers torment: So ſhall the godly meet in a Congregation, and never ſeparate more; here the godly are diſperſed, as the Stars are ſcattered throughout the firmament; here they live intermingled with wicked men; *Jacobs Cattel*, and *Labans Cattel* together; but then the *Sheep* ſhall be ſeparated from the *Goats*, and be all drawn into a body by themſelves.

Again, 'tis a day of *manifeſtation*; the *Lords Decrees* and *Counſels* are manifeſted; creation and providence are but ſubſervient means in order to the triumphs of this day, that the glory of his grace may be advanced in the ſalvation of the Eleſt; and the glory of his juſtice in the puniſhment of the wicked; who upon this account are ſaid to be *made for the day of evil*, *Prov. 16. 4.* where the Holy Ghoſt pitcheth upon that part of the decree which is hardeſt to be digeſted: The making of the wicked for the glory of the Lords juſtice in that day. The *wiſdom of God in the courſes of his providence* is then manifeſted; for the ſtory of the world is brought before the Saints; we ſee providence now by pieces, but then the whole contexture of it; the *ſecrets of men* are then manifeſted; and upon what principles and ends they have acted, *1 Cor. 4. 6.* The *truth of the promiſes and threatnings* is then manifeſted; in the day of Gods patience there is a darkneſs and veil upon the Scriptures, we cannot ſee how they are made good; but in the day of Gods recompenſe we ſhall; what promiſes, threatnings, prophecies mean: but chiefly is it a day of *manifeſtation* in regard of the *Sons of God*, *Romans. 8. 19.* All is now hidden; Chriſt is

hidden; and the Saints are hidden; their *life* is hidden, *Gals.* 3. 3. *their glory* is hidden, *1 John* 3. 2. but then *Christ shall appear*, and *we shall appear with him in glory*; as *Moses* told the Rebels, *Numb.* 16. *To morrow the Lord will shew who are his*; the *first-born* and *only begotten Son of God* then is manifested; *Christ* will appear in all his royalky and glory, as the great God and Saviour, and Judge of the world, as the *great God*; therefore 'tis said, he will appear in the *glory of the Father*, *Matth.* 24. 13. *Matth.* 16. 27. The mytery of his person will then be discovered to the uttermost; and therefore he will appear in such a glory as never creature was capable of, nor can be; guests at it we may by the glory discovered at the giving of the Law, when *Moses* shook for fear, *Hebrews* 12. 19. By the light that shone at his Incarnation, *Luke* 2. At his Transfiguration, *Matth.* 17. By those beams of Majesty which broke out from him when the Souldiers came to take him, *John* 18. 6. by his appearance to *Paul*; it struck him blind for three days, *Acts* 9. By *Isaiahs* terrour, when he saw God in a vision, *Isai.* 6. And as he will manifest himself to be the *great God*, so the *true Saviour of the world*: the manner of his appearance shall make a full recompense for his abasement: at his first coming *John* was his fore-runner (as we have said) now an *Arch-Angel*; then he came with a few *fisher-men*; now with a *multitude of Angels*: then riding on the Colt of an *Ass*; now upon the *Clouds*: then as the *Son of Man*; now as the *Son of God*: then in the *form of a Servant*; now in the *glory of the Father*: then Crowned with *Thorns*; now *Glory and Honour*: then to *teach righteousness*; now to *reward righteousness*: then in the *similitude of sinful flesh*, *Rom.* 8. 3. now the second time *without sin*, *Hebrews* 9. 27. At his first coming he was not a sinner; but he came in the garb of a sinner, afflicted, miserable; we *judged him as one forsaken of God*; but now he cometh as one discharged of that debt and burden, and as one highly honoured by God the Father.

Once more; He cometh in all things besitting the worlds Judge, accompanied with Angels as his attendance, sitting upon a *visible Throne*, that he may be seen of all, heard of all; In earthly Judicatories, when great Malefactors are to be tried, the whole majesty and glory of a Nation is brought forth; the Judge

Judge in gorgeous apparel, accompanied with the flower of the Country, Nobles and Gentry, and a great conflux of people: So here, Christ cometh forth as the Judge, accompanied with *Angels and Saints*, powerfully executing the work of that day; And the only begotten Son of God is manifested: but this is a day of *manifestation*, not only of the Son, but of the Sons of God; namely, the *Saints*; who are then set forth in their best robes: In Winter the tree appeareth not what 'tis, the sap and life is hidden in the root; but when Summer cometh all is discovered: so now it doth not appear who are Gods, nor what they shall be; but at this day all is manifest; *When Christ shall appear, we shall appear with him in glory*; they shall attain to that fulness of glory, as their hearts could never conceive: 'tis said *2 Thess. 1. 10. Christ will be admired in them*; the Angels shall stand wondering what Christ is about to do with Creatures that but newly crept out of dust and rottenness; every one of them shall shine as the Sun; and what a great and glorious day must that be, when there is a constellation of so many Suns? They shall share with Christ in the glory of his Kingdom, as being associated with him in judging the world: *The upright shall have Dominion over them in the morning, Psalm 49. 14.* Those that are now scorned, persecuted, oppoied every where; in the morning of the Resurrection, when they awake to meet Christ, then shall they have dominion over the carnal world; therefore sentence beginneth with the godly, as execution doth with the wicked; the Elect are first acquitted before the ungodly are condemned, that they may joyn afterwards with Christ in judging the world, *2 Cor. 6. 2.*

Again, 'tis great in regard of the *manner of process*; but of that see verse 15.

3. The consequences of this day they are Three. 1. *The sending of the persons judged into their everlasting state.* 2. *The resigning up of the Kingdom to the Father.* 3. *The burning of the world.*

1. *The sending of the persons judged into their everlasting estate*, the Elect into glory, and the wicked into torments, *Matth. 25. 34. Come ye blessed of my Father, &c.* you have been too long absent from me; come receive the fruit of your faith and hope; but *verse 41. Go ye cursed, &c.* they are

banished out of Christs presence with such a terrible ban and proscription, as shall never be reversed. As *Hamans* face was covered, and so led away to execution: so are they chased out of Christs presence, with horrtour, yelling, and howling, with the voyce of Dragons, and begging for mercy, but find none. Now from this sentence there is no appeal, 'tis pronounced by Christ as God-Man. On earth, many times, Gods sentence is repealed, *if the Nation will repent*, &c. *Jer.* 18. 8. and so though God doth never change his Decree, he doth often change his Sentence; but the day of patience is now past, and therefore this Sentence can never be recalled. Again, the execution is *speedy*. Here many times the Sentence is passed, but Sentence is *not speedily executed upon an evil doer*, *Eccles.* 8. 11: Once more this execution *beginning with the wicked* in the sight of the just, *πρώτοι λήξουσιν*, gather you first the Tares, &c. *Matth.* 13. 30. worketh the more upon the envy and grief of the wicked, that they are thrust out whiles the godly remain with Christ, seeing execution done; and the godly have the deeper sense of their condition *ἀντιλήμματα παρ' ἀλλήλων*, &c. Contraries put together do more heighten one another, in the execution of the wicked they may see from what they are delivered by grace. Again, the sentence is executed upon the *whole man*, and that for ever; *body and soul* are partakers as in the work, so in the punishment; and reward; and 'tis eternal for the reward is built on an infinite merit and the punishment is eternal, because an infinite Majesty is offended; and in the next world, men are in their finall Estate without possibility of Change; therefore God is never weary of blessing the good, and cursing the wicked.

2. The next consequent is, the *resigning and giving up the Kingdome to the Father*, spoken of, *1 Corinthians*, 15. from 24. to 28. Kingdome may be put for *Royal Authority* or *Subjects governed*, as the people we call sometimes the kingdome of *England*, or Kingdome of *France*: Christ is ever Head of the Church, and in Heaven we subsist not onely by Vertue of his *everlasting Merit*, but *everlasting influence*; for he is the *Life*, *John* 14. 6. And therefore I take Kingdome here in the latter sense for the *Subjects* or the *Church*, who are resigned or presented to God, *Ephesians*, 5. 27. as the fruits of Christs purchase,

as a prey snatched out of the teeth of Lyons: the form of presentation you have, *Hebrews 2. 13. Behold I, and all the little ones which thou hast given me*: Oh what a great and glorious day will this be, when we shall see Christ and all his little ones following him, and the great Shepherd of the Sheep going into his everlasting Folds, and all the Elect in his Company, with their Crowns on their heads, singing, *O Grave! where is thy victory? O Death! where is thy sting?* when all Enemies shall be broken, and the Church lodged in those blessed mansions; what applauses and acclamations will there be between them and Christ, between them and the Angels, them and their fellow Saints? how should we strive to be some of this number?

3. The next Consequence is, the *burning of the World*; which is set forth at large in *2 Peter 3. per totum*. The passages there are literally to be taken; for the fire there spoken of, is compared with the *Waters of Noah*, which was a judgement really executed; and by this fire (it is probable) the World will not be consumed, but renewed and purged; for 'tis compared to a *melting fire*, *2 Pet. 3. 10*. And the Apostle saith elsewhere, *Rom. 8. 21. And in the everlasting estate God will have all things new*, even the World it self: the Use of this renewed world is either for an *Habitation to the just*, or that it may remain as a *standing Monument* of Gods wisdom and power. This burning doth not goe before the day of judgement, but follow after it; for it seemeth to be an instrument of vengeance on the wicked, *2 Pet. 3. 7*. I will not be so bold with the Schoolmen, as to say that the *faculent* and droffie parts of this fire are reserved for the torment of the wicked in Hell for ever: but in the general, we may safely say, that 'tis an instrument of Gods vengeance on them. Well now, that day which hath such an end and cloze, must needs be a *great day*; *Sodoms fire* was dreadful; but nothing to this burning; that was of one particular place, but this of the *whole World*; that was a *preparative warning*, but this the *last expression* of his wrath against the ungodly world. Many give divers witty reasons for this burning, a taste may not be unwelcome; under the Law the vessel that held the sin-offering was to be purged with fire, so the World,

World, where sin hath been committed. The Object of our Adulteries is burnt and defaced, that we may know the anger of the Lords jealousy; * the old World was destroyed by *Wasser, propter ardorem libidinis*, because of the heat of lust; and the present World burnt with *fire, propter temporem charitatis*, because of the coldness of love in the latter dayes. But of such kind of Allusions more then enough.

You see then by all this, that the day of judgement is a great day; let us now apply it.

Application. If it be a great day, let us regard it more seriously; for all things should be regarded according to their weight. This is the greatest day that ever we shall see; and therefore we should be more affected with this day then with any thing else; we have sleight thoughts of things to come; and therefore they do not work with us, can we expect such a day, and not spend a thought upon it? Oh Christians, *look* for it more, *long* for it more, *provide* for it more.

1. *Look for it, Phil. 3. 21. Time 2. 13.* Every time you look up to the Clouds, remember you have a Saviour, that in time will come from thence, and call the world to an account; Faith should alwaies stand ready to meet him, as if he were upon his way; as *Rebecca spied Isaac afar off*; so doth faith which is the *Evidence of things not seen*, look within the Curtain of the Heavens, and spy out Christ as preparing for his coming. If he carrieth longer then we expect, he is not *slack*, 2 *Pet. 3. 9.* But we are *hasty*; he wants no affection to us *his delights were with the sons of men* before they were created, *Proverbs 8. 31.* And certainly now he is so deeply interested in us, as having bought us with his blood, he desireth to enjoy what he hath purchased: 'tis not *want of Love* keepeth him away, nor *want of Truth*, God is Punctual in his Promise even to a day, *Exodus, 12. 41.* *Even the self same day, &c.* If all things were ready he would come presently: therefore wait and look still; they were not deceived that expected his first coming in the flesh; 'twas said, *A Virgin shall conceive*, was it not done? that God would *bring his Son out of Egypt*; was it not done? that he should ride to *Jerusalem* upon the Foal of an Ass, and was it not done? Surely the God that hath been faithful all along hitherto, will not fail at last.

2. *Long for it.* The faithful love his appearing, 2 Tim. 4. 8. This is the great day which they long to see, that they may meet with their beloved, and see him in all his Glory and Royalty. They have heard much of Christ, and tasted much of Christ, and they love him much, but yet have they not seen him; they know him by hearsay, and by *Spiritual experience*, but never saw his person; *whom having not seen you love, &c.* They have seen his Picture crucified their your eyes, Gal. 3. 1. *Beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord*, 2 Cor. 3. 18. therefore they cannot be satisfied till this day cometh about; Oh, when shall it once be, *the Spirit in: he Bride saith, come, Rev. 22. 17.* Nature saith not *come*, but *tarry still*; if it might go by voyces; whether Christ should come, yea, or no, carnal man would never give their voyce this way. The Language of corrupt nature is, *depart*, Job 22: 14. Carnal Men are of the Devils mind, *Art thou come to torment us before our time? Matthew 8.* They cannot endure to hear of it, but *come, Oh come*, saith Grace: this day we have cause to long for, not onely upon Christs account but our own; 'tis the day of our *perfection* as well as Christs *Royalty*: now every thing tendeth to its perfect state, so doth a Christlian, then there is *perfect holiness* and *perfect freedom*: we never find Christ a *Saviour* to the uttermost till then; to the glorified spirits he is but a Saviour in part; some fruit of sin is continued upon the body; but then body and soul are united and perfectly glorified to enjoy God in Heaven: Christ them cometh to make an end of what he had begun; he first came to redeem *our souls*, and then our *bodies* from corruption, the body is a Captive in in the Grave, when the Soul is set at liberty; 'tis held under the power of Death till that day: the Butler was not afraid to go before *Pharaoh*, because *Joseph* told him he should be set at liberty, *Lift up your heads, 'tis a day of Redemption*, Luke 17. 28. Christ cometh to loosen the bands and shackles of Death, to think and speak of that day with horror, doth ill become him that looketh for such great priviledges.

3. *Provide for that day.* 'Tis called the *great and notable day of the Lord*, Acts 2. 20. It should be the whole employment of our lives to prepare for it; but how shall we provide for that day?

I Answer, By making peace with God in and by Jesus Christ. When

When Jacob heard that *Esau* was coming with a great power and force, he sendeth to make peace with him : we hear of a great day coming, *When the Lord shall descend from Heaven with a shout, and all his holy Angels with him.* 1. Let us comprimize all differences between us and him, we are advised so to do, *Luk. 14. 32. While he is yet a great way off, he sendeth an Embassage, and desireth conditions of Peace.* We need not send to the Lord, God maketh the offer to us ; let us lay down the weapons of our defiance, and accept of the terms proposed. 2. If you would provide for this day, clear up your union with *Jesus Christ*, he is the Judge, and there is no condemnation to them that are in *Christ*, *Rom. 8. 1.* Will the head condemn his own members : If we abide in him, we shall be able to look him in the face, *We shall have boldness in that day, 1 Job. 2. 28.* then though it be a great day, it will not be a terrible day to us. 3. *Frequent Communion with him at the Throne of Grace.* When familiar friends meet together after long absence, what a sweet interview is there ? what mutual embraces and endearments pass between them ? So acquaint your selves with *Christ* aforehand, *Job 22.* common acquaintance with him in external worship will not serve the turn, *Luk 13. 27. We have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and heard thee in our streets ; and yet Christ saith, I know you not ;* there must be an holy intimacy, and sweet experience of him ; you must know him in the spirit. 4. *By holy conversation,* both as to the matter, and end of it. For the great end of this day is, that grace may be glorious ; other things are honoured in the world, as power, and strength, and cunning, and civil endowments, but then eminency in grace cometh to be crowned, *2 Pet. 3. 12. We that look for such things, what manner of persons ought we to be in all holiness and godliness of Conversation ?* There are two words there used, *holiness and godliness ;* the one relateth to the matter of our actions, that we should do things good, and just, and pure. The other to our end and aime ; we must do all this, as in and to the Lord, making him the supream end of all that we do. 5. We may press you to *Heavenliness in your choice.* where lieth your Treasure ? If the enjoyment of the world be your chiefest good, that will be of no use to you in that day ; in a disdain to our choice, all worldly things are burnt before our eyes ; but if your happiness lyeth in Heaven, thither you are

are going to take full possession of it ; at the last day wicked men cannot murmur ; Gods judgements are but their own choice ; if the *Goats* be placed on the *left hand*, and the *Sheep* on the *right*, 'Tis but according to their prepotterous affections here in the world, *Prov. 3. 16, Length of dayes are in her right hand, and in her left hand riches and honour.* Eternity is the right hand blessing. Now if you despise a blessed Eternity in comparison of those *left hand blessings, riches and honour* no wonder that your own measure is recompensed into your bosoms. 6 *Love the Brethren.* This is the great day when all the Saints meet together ; and how can we expect to meet with them with comfort, if we should not love them ? 1 *John 4. 16, 17. There we shall have boldness, &c.* I will be a joyful meeting when those whom we have loved, prayed for, fasted with, and (if necessity did require) relieved, shall then be found in such esteem and honour. 7. *Mercifulness* to the poor, see *Matth. 25. 35, 36. with 42. and 43. verses.* Christ hath told us afore-hand what questions he will ask when he cometh, *Have you fed ? have you visited ? have you clothed ? &c.* 'Tis good that we should be prepared of an Answer. 8. *Faithfulness in Gods Ordinances, and the matters of his house.* Our Lord is gone, but he will come again to take an account how matters have been managed during his absence ; the usual period which is fixed to Ordinances, is the Lords coming to judgement, 1 *Cor. 11. 26. Ye do shew forth the Lords death till he come.* And 1 *Tim. 6. 14. Kept his Commandment without spot, until the appearing of the Lord Jesus Christ.* He hath left his Ordinances in his Church as a pledge of his coming, and to keep the great promise still afoot ; therefore above all things they should be kept pure and uncorrupt.

V E R S E V I I .

Even as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the Cities about them, in like manner giving themselves over to Fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.

IN this Verse is the third example, fitly suited to the former, the *Angels* had the blessings of *Heaven*, the *Israelites* of the *Church*, and *Sodom* of the *World*. But the *Angels* upon their Apostasy lost *Heaven*; the murmuring *Israelites* were shut out of *Canaan*; and the *Sodomites* were, together with their fruitful soil and pleasant land destroyed; you see, *Heaven-mercies*, and *Church-mercies*, and *World-mercies*, are all forfeited by the *Creatures* ingratitude. This last instance is propounded as the first part of a similitude, the *redition* of which is in the next verse.

In the words observe, 1. The places or people judged. [*Sodom and Gomorrah, and the Cities round about them in like manner*] those two Cities are only mentioned here, as also *Gen. 19. 14.* because the principal; in *Hosea, 11. 8.* two others are only mentioned, *Admah, and Zeboim*; but *Deut. 29. 23.* all four mentioned, the whole land is *Brimstone, Salt and burning like overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah, Admah and Zeboim, the which the Lord overthrew in his anger, and in his wrath.* Now the *Cities* are mentioned rather than the *Persons*; so more utter destruction of the places, together with the inhabitants; for that Clause [*the Cities about them in like manner*] in the Original τῶν ἐκείνων πόλεων ὑπερβολῶς, the word for [*them*] is in the masculine gender; whereas [*Cities*] the next Antecedent is in the feminine; therefore some refer it to the remote Antecedent: the *Angels* and *Israelites* as they were punished, *Sodom*, and those *Cities* in like manner. So *Junino*, but I suppose because [*Cities*] doth not only imply the *Places*, but the *Inhabitants*; therefore, the Masculine gender was used by the Apostle.

2. Their sin is specified [*giving themselves over to Fornication, and going after strange flesh.*] Here are two great sins charged:

charged upon them. 1. The first is [*giving themselves over to fornication*] *ἐκπορεύσασθαι*, the word is usual, and therefore diversely rendered. One translation, [*defile themselves with fornication*] the vulgar, *exfornicata*, as noting the strangeness and abominableness of their lust; but that is implied in the next expression; our translation fitly rendereth it by such a phrase as signifieth their excess and vehement addictedness to unclean practices.

2. The next sin is [*going after strange flesh*] 'Tis a modest and covert expression, implying their monitrous and unlawful lusts, contrary to the course and institution of nature, a filthiness scarce to be named, from them called *Sodomy*; the Apostle Paul expresseth it thus, *Rom. i. 27. Leaving the natural use of the Woman they burned in their lust one towards another, men with men, working that which was unseemly.* 'Tis called here [*strange flesh*] *σαρκὰς ἑτέρας*, *other flesh* as being other then what nature hath appointed, or because 'tis impossible that man and man in that execrable Act should make *one flesh*, as man and woman do.

3. Their judgment is set down [*suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.*] *Sodom*, we know, and the Cities round about it were consumed by fire and brimstone rained down from Heaven; which though a dreadful, was but a temporal fire: in what sense doth the Apostle call it here *eternal fire*? Some to mollifie the seeming aulterity of the phrase, read thus, [*were made an example of eternal fire suffering vengeance*] that is, in that judgment which was executed upon them, God would give the world a Type and Figure of Hell. Others by *eternal fire* understand the duration of the effects of the first temporal punishment; the soil thereabout wearing the marks of Gods curse to this day. Others not much differing from the former, by *eternal fire* understand an *utter destruction*; and labour to evince it from the use of the phrase in a like sense; and the parallel place in *Peter*, 2 *Pet. 2. 6. He turned the Cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes, and condemned them with an overthrow*, that is, utterly destroyed them; but why we need to be so tender I know not, the *Sodomites* being generally represented as men under *everlasting judgment*, *Math. 11. 24.* and the temporal judgment making way for eternal: though as to the state of particular persons we judge not. See *Rivet in Gen. exercit. 97.* page 474.

4. Here is the *end* and *aim* of the judgment [*are set forth for an example*] that is, to be a notable document and instruction to the world, to keep them under the awe of God; and therefore every where in the Prophetick threatnings of the Word is this instance alluded unto.

The words are explained; but how shall we accommodate them to the Apostles purpose? I answer, very well; there is a fit correspondency between the case in hand and this example; the *Sodomites* went after *strange flesh*, and these Apostates after *strange opinions*: These errors and opinions of theirs tended to *sensuality*, and so still there is a greater suitableness; The School of *Simon*, the *Nicholaitans*, the *Gnosticks*, did defile themselves with monstrous and abominable lust, as the *Sodomites* did; and therefore he threatneth them with a destruction like to that of *Sodom*, yea with eternal fire figured thereby, especially they having been formerly enlightened with some knowledge of the truth, which the *Sodomites* were not. Let me now come to the Observations.

Observat. 1. *Cities and Countries suffer for the evils of the Inhabitants; as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the Cities round about them were consumed with fire and brimstone, and turned into a dead lake. Original sin brought on an Original curse; Adams fall, a curse upon the whole earth, Gen. 3. 17. Cursed is the ground for thy sake, thorns and thistles shall it bring forth to thee: And actual sins do bring on an actual curse, Psal. 107. 34. He turneth a pleasant land into saltness, for the wickedness of them that dwell therein. A Traytor forfeits not only his life but his goods; so we do not only forfeit our persons, but all our comforts into Gods hands; and 'tis but fit that the earth should be to us, after all our labours, what we are to God after all his husbandry bestowed upon us; we are barren of good fruits as to God, and so justly may the land be to us. I Remember, the Apostle saith the Creature was made subject to vanity, *in inuoluntate*, not willingly, Rom. 8. 19. the creature hath only a natural tendency and inclination, and that carries it to its own good; we had free-will and choice, but abused it, and so brought our selves and the creature under the bondage and thralldom of corruption; so that the earth which was intended to be a monument of Gods glory, is now in great part a monument of Gods displeasure and our rebellion;*

bellion; 'Tis observable, on the contrary side, that the glorious times of the Gospel are expressed by the restoration of the creatures, *Isaiah* 30. 23, 24, 25, 26. and *Isa.* 11. 6, 7, 8. For as the condition of the Servant doth depend on the Master; so doth the state of the creature upon our conformity or disobedience to God. Well then, avoid sin, if not in pity to your *poor souls*, in pity to the *poor creatures*, to your *poor country*; as *David* said, *What have these poor Sheep done?* So, what have the Creatures done, that you kindle a burning under their glory? See *Jer.* 2. 18, 19. *The land is laid waste, and Cities burnt without an inhabitant*: What is the cause of all this? even our sins against the Lord; that a man should be the *ruine of his Country* and *native soil*, this should go near to us; shall we turn this *pleasant land* into *saltiness*? and lay these dwellings waste! these streets into ashes! carnal men are usually moved by carnal arguments, and tremble more to hear of the loss of their estates than of their souls: we are startled to hear of scarcity, and famine, and fires, and pestilences: all these are the fruits of sin.

Those Cities were utterly destroyed; and accordingly is the destruction of *Sodom* put for an utter overthrow: See *Isaiah* 13. 19. *Zephaniah* 2. 9. *Jer.* 48. 18. *Jer.* 50. 40. 2 *Pet.* 2. 6. Thence, that in judgment wicked men may be brought to an utter destruction, The *Synagogue of Satan* may be utterly destroyed, but not the *City of God*; in the saddest miseries there is hope of Gods Children, that their dead stock will bud and scent again, *Zach.* 9. 12. *Prisoners of hope*; the cutting off of root and branch is the judgment of the wicked, *Mal.* 4. 1. Their memorial may be blotted out, but *Sions* cannot; 'tis the design of the enemies to extinguish the memory of the Church, and many times to appearance there is *none left*; yet out of their ruins and ashes there springeth up a new brood, and *holy seed* to God; they are *sorely afflicted*, *Psal.* 129. 1, 2. yet Christ stands his ground; they are not wholly prevailed over; the Church may visibly fail, but not totally: well then, in the midst of sad miseries, bless God for a *remnant*; it may be bad, but 'tis not as *Sodom*: *Isa.* 1. 9. In times of general defection there will be *two or three berries in the top of the uppermost bough*, *Isa.* 17. Some that may continue the name of God, and survive the Churches troubles, that may yet praise him.

Observat. 2.

Again,

Again, do not inhaunt With the wicked, and suffer your souls to enter into their secret ; evil societies may be absolutely destroyed, root and branch : *Sodom* was condemned with an overthrow ; 'tis seasonable advice, come out of her my people, lest you partake of her plagues, Rev. 18: 4. *Babylon* that was a nest for unclean sinners, will be made a cage for unclean birds.

From that [and the Cities about them in like manner.] Observe ; Likeness in sin will involve us in the same punishment ; they perished, and the other Cities in like manner : none had safety but *Lot*, who consented not, but grieved for these impurities, 2 Pet. 2. 8. Gods wrath maketh no distinction. *Quos una impietas prophanavit, una sententia delevit* (saith *Ambrose*) they were found in the same sin, and therefore surprized by the same judgement ; the destruction of the transgressors and sinners shall be together, Isa. 1. 28. That is, the one as well as the other, by what names or titles soever distinguished. Why ? I answer, fellowship in evil can neither excuse sin, nor keep off wrath : it cannot excuse sin ; nothing more usual then for men to say, they do as others do ; if you do as others do, you shall suffer as others do : example doth not lessen sin but increase it, partly because their own Act is an approbation of the Act of others : imitation is a *post consent*, and so besides your own guilt, you are guilty of their sins that sinned before you ; partly because 'tis hard to sin against example, but we sin against conscience ; we allowing that in our selves which we formerly condemned in another : partly because 'tis a sin against warning ; to stumble at a stone, at which we see others stumble, is an error, and without excuse :

* Non ego sum
ambiciosus sed
nemo aliter
Romæ vivere
potest, &c.

Say not then 'tis the fashion and guise, how can we do otherwise ? be not conformed to the fashions of this world : you should be like *Lot*, chaste in *Sodom*, or like those Christians that were godly in *Nero's Court*.

Again, it doth not keep off wrath ; multitudes and single persons are all one to avenging Justice ; the devouring burning of Gods wrath can break through Bryars and Thorns. 'Tis said, Prov. 11. 21. Though hand joyn in hand, the wicked shall not be unpunished. Confederations and societies in evil, are as nothing to the power of God : though sometimes the sons of *Zemimah*, powerful oppressors, with their combined interests, may be too hard for men. Well then, learn to live by rule, and not by

by example; and propose the sins of others to your grief, not imitation: have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but reprove them rather, Eph. 5. their practice will never afford you excuse, nor exemption. Your duty is to be good in a wicked age; fresh, like fish, in the salt water; follow not a multitude to do evil: wickedness is never the less odious, because 'tis more common; 'tis not safe always to keep the road, the bad way is known by the breadth of it, and the much company in it, *Matth. 7. 13.* To walk with God is praise-worthy, though none do it besides thy self; and to walk with men in the way of sin is dangerous, though millions do it besides thee.

Again, from that, [*And the Cities about them in like manner,*] the lesser Cities imitated the greater, *Admah* and *Zeboim* followed the example of *Sodom* and *Gomorrab*; An error in the first concoction is seldom mended in the second; if sin pass the heads and chiefs of the people, 'tis taken up by others under their command; when the first Sheet is done off, others are Printed by the same Stamps. Magistrates are publick fountains of good or evil, to the people over whom they are set; if they be cold and careless in the worship of God, given to contempt of the Ministry, enemies to Reformation, 'twill be generally taken up as a fashion by others. When the head is sick, the whole heart is faint, *Isa. 1. 5.* *Diodorus Siculus* telleth us of a people in *Ethiopia*, that if their Kings halted, they would maim themselves, that they might halt likewise; if they wanted an eye, in a foolish imitation they would make themselves blind, that they might comply even with the defects and diseases of their Princes: the vices of them in place and power are authorized by their example and pass for virtues; if they be sleight in the use of Ordinances, 'twill be taken up as a piece of Religion, by inferiours, to be so too.

Observat. 4.

From the first crime here specified [*giving themselves over to Fornication,*] That Adulterous uncleanness doth much displease God. When they were given over to fornication, they were given over to judgement.

Observat. 5.

1. This is a sin that doth not only defile the Soul, but the Body, *1 Cor. 6. 18.* Every sin that a man doth is without the body, but he that committeth Adultery sinneth against his own body: most other sins imply an injury done to others, to God, or our Neighbour:

* 1 Thel. 4. 4.

* 1 Cor. 6. 9.

Neighbour : this is more directly an injury to our selves, to our own bodies : 'tis a wrong to the body considered, either * as our *vessel*, or as the * *Temple of the holy Ghost* : if you consider it as *our vessel* or instrument for natural uses, you wrong it by uncleanness : namely, as it destroyeth the health of the body, quencheth the *vigour* of it, and blasteth the *beauty*, and so 'tis *self-murder* : If you consider it as the Temple of the Holy Ghost, 'tis a dishonour to the body to make it a channel for lust to pass through ; shall we make a *stye* of a *Temple* ? abuse that to so vile a purpose which the Holy Ghost hath chosen to dwell in, to plant it into Christ, as a part of his mystical body, to use it as an instrument in Gods service ; and finally, to raise it out of the grave, and conform it to Christs glorious body : The dignity of the body, well considered, is a great preservative against lust.

2. It *bravenneth the soul* ; the softness of all sensual pleasures hardneth the heart ; but this sin, as being the consummate act of sensuality, much more, *Hosea 4. 11: Whoredom and Wine take away the heart* ; these two are mentioned, because usually they go together, and both take away the heart, besot the conscience, take away the tenderness of the affections : so that men are not ashamed of sin, insensible of danger, and unfit for duty ; and so grow sapless, careless, senseless.

3. Next to the *Body* and *Soul* ; there is the name, now it blotteth the name, *Prov. 6. 33. a wound and a dishonour shall he get, and a reproach that shall not be wiped off. Sensual wickedness* is most disgraceful, as having turpitude in it, and being sooner discerned then spiritual.

4. It blasteth the estate, *Heb. 13. 4. Whoremongers and Adulterers God will judge* ; he will judge others, but surely these, and that remarkably in this life. 5. This doth exceedingly pervert the order of humane societies ; *Solomon* maketh it worle then theft, *Prov. 6. 29, 30, 31, 32. A Thief stealeth out of necessity, but here is no cogent necessity ; the loss here is not repairable, as that which is made by theft : It bringeth in great confusion in families, &c. therefore Adultery under the Law was punished by death, which theft was not.*

6. It is a sin usually accompanied with impenitency ; namely, as it weareth out remorse, and every spark of good conscience ;

read

read those cutting places, *Prov. 22. 14. The mouth of a strange woman is a deep pit, and he that is abhorred of the Lord shall fall therein: so Prov. 2. 19. none that go unto her return again, do they take hold of the ways of life?* So see *Eccles. 7. 26, 27, 28. verses.* It is a sin into which God useth to give over Reprobates; *Solomon* saith he knew *but one* returning. Well then, be not drunk with the *Wine of Sodom*, and do not scrue out the clusters of *Gomorrah*; Whoredom is a deep ditch or gulf, wherein those that are abhorred of the Lord are suffered to fall; beware of all tendings that way; do not soak and steep the soul in pleasures; take heed of *effeminacy*; *μαλακοι*, the soft or effeminate shall not enter into the Kingdom of God, *1 Cor. 6. 9.* Beware of *lustful glances*, *Math. 5. 28.* of rolling the fancy upon undue objects; heart-defilement maketh way for corporal; lust beginneth in *wanton eyes* many times, and 'tis fed by a *delicacy* and *unworthy softness*. Guard the senses, cut off the provisions of the flesh, avoid occasions, be employed. Again, if you have stumbled into this deep ditch, repent the more speedily, the more seriously; the case is sad, but not altogether desperate; we read of a possibility for *Publicans and Harlots* entering into the Kingdom of God. Bewail your estate, as *David* doth, *Psal. 51.* His Adultery left a stain upon him: *Except in the matter of Uriah, &c.* *Job* saith, 'tis a fire that consumeth to destruction, and will root out all your increase, *Job 31. 12.* therefore quench it the soon: r, &c.

Again, from the other sin, [and going after strange flesh] Observe, *sin is never at a stay*; first, *uncleanness*, and then given over to uncleanness, and then *strange flesh*: when a stone runneth down hill, it stayeth not till it cometh to the bottom; a filthy sinner is growing more filthy still, until he hath outgrown the heart of a man; as the *Sodomites* did, *men with men working that which is unseemly*; a sin which none but a Devil in the likeness of a man would commit; a sin that hath filchiness enough in it to defile the tongue that speaketh of it. Well then, here is a glass wherein to see the *wickedness of our natures*; who would think reason should invent so horrid an Act! *Rom. 1. 27.* they had no more original corruption then thou and I have; if God remove the bridle, whicher shall we run? Let wicked men consider hence, how foolishly they promise them-

R r

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Observat. 6.

selves immunity from drunkenness, adultery, or any gross wickedness, Caution any of them against those things, no I warrant you (say they) do you think I am such a wretch? *Is thy servant a Dog?* 2 Kings 8.13.

Observ. 7.

From that, [*The vengeance of eternal fire*] The wicked Sodomites were not one y burnt up by that temporal judgement, but cast into Hell, which is here called *Eternal fire*: Hell is set forth by two Notions, a *Worm that never dyeth*, and a *fire that never goeth out*, Mark 9.44. In both which expressions there is an allusion to the *Wormes* that breed in dead bodies, and the fire wherewith they were wont to burn their dead in former times. And the one implyeth the *Worm of Conscience*, the other the fire of Gods wrath.

1. The *Worm* is bred in the body it self, and therefore fitly representeth the gnawings of Conscience; the Worm of Conscience consisteth in three things; there is, *Memoria præteritorum, sensus præsentium, & metus futurorum*. First, Conscience worketh on what is past the remembrance of their former enjoyments and past pleasures, Luke 16. 25: *Son remember that thou in thy life time, &c.* So of time wasted, opportunities of grace sleighted, the folly of thine own choice, &c. all which are sad reflections to them. Secondly, there is a *sense of the present pain*: Here when they were corrected, they were senseless like stocks and stones; but then there being nothing to mitigate their grief, or beguile the sense of it, no carnal pleasures wherein to sleep Conscience; there must needs be sense and feeling joyned with a *bitter discontent* at their Condition. Thirdly, For the future their Condition is *hopeless*: *Despair*, is one ingredient into their torment, *Hebrewes*, 10. 27. there remaineth nothing but a *fearful looking for the fiery indignation of the Lord*. Thus for the Worm.

2. The next notion is, that of the Text *fire*, or the wrath of God transacted upon them. In the sufferings of the damned God hath an immediate hand, *Heb.* 10. 33. No Creature is strong enough to convey all his wrath: In bearing this wrath, the capacity of the Creature is enlarged to the uttermost, and in their punishment God sets himself a work to shew *the glory of his strength*, *Rom.* 9.22. He *up-holdeth the Creature with one hand*, and *punisheth it with the other*: If his anger be but *kindled*

led a little, and a spark of it fly into the Conscience, the poor Creature is at his wits end: but how dreadful with their portion be, against whom he * *stirreth up all his wrath?* the humane Nature of the Lord Christ, in a just abhorrency, recoyled when he was to taste of this Cup: we that cannot endure the gripes of the Colick, the torment of the Stone, the pain of the Rack, *How shall we dwell with devouring burnings?* and all this is for ever. As our Obligations to God are infinite, and as we turn the back upon eternal happiness offered in the Gospel, and as the Majesty offended by sin is infinite, so that we cannot restore the honour to God which we have taken away; Therefore by just reason is our punishment eternal. In the other World, men are in their final Estate; the Fire continueth for ever, the Creature is not abolished, and the Fire continueth for ever, the breath of the living Lord still keepeth the flame burning. We think a Prayer long, a Sermon long; what will Hell be? In the night if we cannot sleep, we count the hours, and every minute seems tedious. Oh what will they do that are tormented night and day for ever & ever? Rev. 20. 10 Now this is the portion of all that forget God; Oh, who would run this hazard for a little temporal satisfaction! the scourges of Conscience that we meet with here are too great price for the short pleasures of a brutish lust; much more the Worm that never dieth, the Fire that shall never be quenched.

There is one note more, and that is from that Clause [are set forth for an example] Observe thence, *That Sodoms destruction is the worlds great example.* Both Peter and Jude shew that this was the end of Gods judgements upon Sodom, that they might be an example to all that live ungodly. * Psal. 78:39

You will say, what have we to do with Sodom? their sins being so unnatural, their judgements so unusual!

1. As to their sins, I inquire, are there none of Sodoms sins amongst us? If not going after strange flesh yet Fornication; if not Fornication, yet Pride, and idleness, and fulness of bread? I say again, though our sins be not so great in themselves, yet by necessary circumstance and aggravation they may be greater; as impenitency, unbelief, abuse and neglect of the Gospel, despising the offers of Grace; the grossest sins against the Law are not so great as sins against the Gospel, *Matthew 11. 24. It*

shall be more tolerable for Sodom, &c. We sin against more *light*, more *love*, &c. 2. As to the judgements, though God doth not now adaise smite a Countrey with judgements immediately from Heaven, or make it utterly unuseful; as he did Sodom; yet his displeasure is no less against sin; and if not the same, a like judgement, one very grievous may come upon us.

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cia.

This being premised, let us come to open this example, in which these three things are considerable. 1. The *state of Sodom*. 2. The *sins of Sodom*. 3. The *judgement*. The first will shew you *Gods mercy*, the second *their guilt*, the third *Gods justice*. Usually these three follow one another: *great mercies* make way for *great sins*, and *great sins* for *great judgements*.

1. I begin with the *state of Sodom*. There 1. The *quality of the place*; there were sundry goodly Cities, of which Sodom was the principal, fairly situated in the plain of *Jordan*, full of people, and well supplied with Corn, Wine and Oyl, and all earthly Contentments; 'tis said, *Gen. 19. 10. Sodom was pleasant, and as the Garden of the Lord*: And yet afterward this was the place which was the Scene of so much wrath and utter desolation. What may the World learn from hence? that we must give an account for common mercies; God reckoned with the servant that had but one Talent, *Matthew 25*. The world is a place of trial, all men have a trust committed to them; The Talents of the Heathens were *fruitful seasons, food and gladness*, *Acts 14. 17*. God hath never left himself ἀπαρτους, *without a witness*, hath left us ἀναπολογύτους, *without excuse*: a plentiful Soil doth not argue a good people, but a good God. Sodom was pleasantly and richly situated. If we had nothing else to answer for, but an *Island of Blessings*, how poorly have we discharged this Trust?

2. Take notice of *their late Deliverance*, four Kings made war upon them, by whom they were carried Captive and rescued by *Abraham*, *Genesis, 14. 15, 16*. *Deliverances from Warre and Captivity leave a great engagement*; When God hath once spared us, if we repent not, the next turn is utter Destruction. Deliverances if not improved, are but *reprimands*; we are not so much *preserved*, as *reserved*, to greater misery; hoisted up, that our fall may be the more dreadful; snatched out of one misery, that we may be cast into a worse;

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Oh what have we to answer for our late deliverances ! *Sodom* was but once saved in war, we many times ; 'tis to be feared that passage recordeth our doom, *Psal. 166. 43. Many times did he deliver them, but they provoked him by their counsel, and were brought low for their iniquity : deliverances not improved are pledges of certain ruine.* 3. Gods patience in bearing with them : *Sodom* for a long time slept quietly in their sins unmo-
 lested, undisturbed ; * *the sins of Sodom cry to me : the Lord pro-*
 ferred *Abraham*, if there were but ten righteous persons found there, he would spare the Cities : in four Cities not ten righte-
 ous persons ! God is silent as long as their sins would let him be quiet ; but then when he could no longer bear, he goeth down to take vengeance : how long doth the Lord protract the ruine of these wicked Cities ! *justice is his strange work*, but 'tis his work ; mercy doth much with *Col.*, but not all, justice must be heard, especially when it pleadeth on the behalf of *abused mercy* ; God that would spare the sinner, yet hateth the sin : When a people do nothing but weary justice, and abuse mercy, * *the Lord will rain from the Lord, &c. Gen. 19. 24.* Christ will interpose for such a people's destruction ; Heaven will rain down Hell upon a people so obstinately wicked. The Lord is gracious, but not senseless : as he will not always contend, so not always forbear. 4. *Lots* admonition ; it seemeth he frequently reprov'd them, and therefore do they scorn him, *Gen. 19. 9. This one fellow came in to sojourn amongst us, and he will needs be a Judge* ; his soul was not only vexed with those lewd courses, but as occasion was offered, he sought to dissuade them. Thence learn, That God seldom punisheth without a warning : the old World had *Noahs* Ministry, and *Sodom Lots* admonitions : the Lord may say to every punished people, as *Reuben* to his brethren, *Did not I warn you, and you would not hear ? Gen. 42. 22.* Seldome doth he hew a people with the sword, but first he heweth them by Prophets : means of conviction aggravate both the sin and the judgement : Ah ! we have a clearer light, and therefore must expect an heavier doom, *Matth. 10. 15.* sins are aggravated not onely by the foulness of the Act, but the degrees of light against which they are committed : *Sodom* sinned fore-
 ly, as to the act, but they could not sin against so much light as we do ; therefore it shall be easier for them at the day of judgement.

* *Misericordia mea suadet ut parcam, peccatorum clamor cogit ut puniam* Salvianus.

* *Dominus Christum à domino patre.* Concil. Syrm.

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2. Take notice of *their late Deliverance*, four Kings made war upon them, by whom they were carried Captive and rescued by Abraham, *Genesis, 14. 15, 16. Deliverances from Warre and Captivity leave a great engagement*; When God hath once spared us, if we repent not, the next turn is utter Destruction. Deliverances if not improved, are but *reprivals*; we are not so much *preserved*, as *reserved*, to greater misery; hoisted up, that our fall may be the more dreadful; snatched out of one misery, that we may be cast into a worse;

Oh

Oh what have we to answer for our late deliverances ! *Sodom* was but once saved in war, we many times ; 'tis to be feared that passage recordeth our doom, *Psal.* 166. 43. *Many times did he deliver them, but they provoked him by their counsel, and were brought low for their iniquity : deliverances not improved are pledges of certain ruine.* 3. Gods patience in bearing with them : *Sodom* for a long time slept quietly in their sins unmolested, undisturbed ; * *the sins of Sodom cry to me* : the Lord proffered *Abraham*, if there were but ten righteous persons found there, he would spare the Cities : in four Cities not ten righteous persons ! God is silent as long as their sins would let him be quiet ; but then when he could no longer bear, he goeth down to take vengeance : how long doth the Lord protract the ruine of these wicked Cities ! *justice is his strange work*, but 'tis his work ; mercy doth much with God, but not all, justice must be heard, especially when it pleadeth on the beh'f of *abused mercy* ; God that would spare the sinner, yet hateth the sin : When a people do nothing but weary justice, and abuse mercy, * *the Lord will rain from the Lord, &c.* *Gen.* 19. 24. Christ will interpose for such a people's destruction ; Heaven will rain down Hell upon a people so obstinately wicked. The Lord is gracious, but not senseless : as he will not always contend, so not always forbear. 4. *Lots* admonition ; it seemeth he frequently reproved them, and therefore do they scorn him, *Gen.* 19. 9. *This one fellow came in to sojourn amongst us, and he will needs be a Judge* ; his soul was not only vexed with those lewd courses, but as occasion was offered, he sought to dissuade them. Thence learn, *That God seldom punisheth without a warning* : the old World had *Noahs Ministry*, and *Sodom Lots admonitions* : the Lord may say to every punished people, as *Reuben* to his brethren, *Did not I warn you, and you would not hear ?* *Gen.* 42. 22. Seldome doth he hew a people with the sword, but first he heweth them by Prophets : means of conviction aggravate both the sin and the judgement : Ah ! we have a clearer light, and therefore must expect an heavier doom, *Matth.* 10. 15. sins are aggravated not onely by the foulness of the Act, but the degrees of light against which they are committed : *Sodom* sinned sorely, as to the act, but they could not sin against so much light as we do ; therefore it shall be easier for them at the day of judgement.

* *Misericordia mea suadet ut parcam, peccatorum clamor cogit ut puniam* Salvianus.

* *Dominus Christum a domino patre.* Concil. Syrm.

judgement. 5. They had the benefit of Magistracy, those were Cities that were brought into government; we read of the *King of Sodom*, Gen. 14. 2. but it seems he did not interpose his Authority, but rather connive at, and tolerate the wickedness of this people; yea rather approve and partake with them in their abominations. Consider, *when the vices of inferiours are dissembled and winked at by Governours, the Lord himself taketh the matter in hand*; and then look for nothing but speedy ruine: the guilt of a Nation is much encreased when sin is tolerated, yea favoured and countenanced, especially when righteousness is rather restrained and curbed than sin, as the affronts done to *Lot* witnessed; the end why Magistracy was ordained is then perverted, 1 Tim. 2. 2. Rom. 13. 5. namely, for the *punishment of evil doers*, and that goodness be encouraged; they were punished for allowing the filthiness of *strange flesh*. What will become of us if Magistrates should be careless and *wink* at, yea *countenance strange opinions*, as horrid and as much against the *light of Christianity*, as that was against the *light of Nature*!

Secondly, let us look upon the *sins of Sodom*. See Ezek. 16. 49. *Lo this was the iniquity of thy Sister Sodom, pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness, neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy*; to which adde the sins of the Text, and then this black roll is compleat. I shall consider, 1. *The Sins.* 2. *The Aggravations.*

1. *The Sins.* 1. *Pride*; 'Tis hard to enjoy plenty, and not to grow haughty; prosperous Winds soon fill the Sails, but blowing too strongly overturn the Vessel; how few are able to carry a full Cup without spilling? to manage plenty without pride? men grow *rich* and then *high-minded*, and that's the next way to ruine. 2. *Idleness*, an easie careless life maketh way for danger; God sent all into the world for action; standing pools purrifie, and things not used contract rust; to do idle persons settle in o vile and degenerate lusts. 3. *Fulness of bread*; that is corporal delights, Luke 17. 28. *They ate, they drank, they bought, they sold, they builded*; their whole lives were but a diversion from one pleasure to another; how soon are earthly comforts abused into luxury and excess! *Fulness of estate* maketh way for *fulness of bread*, and many beastly sins. 4. *Unmercifulness*, you never knew any *Prodigal*, but they were

were also *uncharitable*; as *Sodom* here, and the *Epicure*, *Luke* 16. and you shall see *James* 5. 4 5. those that nourished their hearts as in a day of slaughter, oppressed the labourers; they that set their hearts for ease and pleasure know not the bitterness of grief, and therefore do not compassionate it in others, *Amos* 6. 6. 5. *Uncleaness*, and fornication, this followeth on the former; fulness of bread must be emptied and unladed in lust. 6. That *beastly wickedness* implied in the Text. When the Angels came to destroy them, because they were of a comely visage, they came raging at the doors, *Gen.* 19. as usually wickedness is increased to the height when God cometh to punish it. Well then, if we put all these together, they were a *lazy, easie, secure, oppressing, filthy and unclean people*: we may wonder more at Gods patience that he bore with them so long, then at his justice, that he punished them so forely.

2. The *Aggravations*: 1. *Shamefulness*, *It.* 3. 9. they declare their sin as *Sodom*, they publish it as *Gomorrah*; when a people are past shame they are past hope, such do dare God to punish them. 2. *Contempt of reproof*, a sure fore-runner of ruine, when the reprover of sin is blamed more then the sinner. Lot seemed as one that mocked, *Gen.* 19. 14. when Gods Messengers are contemned, he can hold no longer.

Thirdly, *their judgement*. The Lord rained from the Lord fire and brimstone upon them. Observe here, 1. The *suddenness*; the Sun shone in the morning as at other times, *Gen.* 19. 23. they had not the least fear of any such mischief at hand; God usually surprizeth a people in their security; after a great calm cometh a storm: *Perish in the mid way*, *Psal.* 2. 11. in their full carriere, when they dream of no such matter. 2. The *equity*; the sin was like the punishment: they first burned with lusts, and then with fire: they burnt with vile unnatural lusts, and therefore against the ordinary course of nature, fire falleth down from Heaven: in this fire there was a stink for their filthiness. Thus doth God retaliate; *Nadab* and *Abihu* offered strange fire, and they were consumed with strange fire coming down from Heaven: *Job* professing his innocency in case of Adultery, saith, *Otherwise let my Wife grind to another, and a stranger bow down upon her*, *Job* 31. 11. implying that God would punish

*Sulphur fœ-
rem habet, ignis
ardorem.*

punish him in his own bed, if he had violated anothers : in the Gospel we read, *Luke 16.* that he was denied a drop that would not give a crumb, &c. 3. Observe the power of God ; God a little before had drowned the world with water, now he consumeth *Sodom by fire* ; all the Elements are at his beck, the Creatures are his Hosts, *Job 37. 6.* If God say, be thou upon the earth, they presently obey ; if we find sins, God will punishments ; he can execute judgments by contrary means ; now drown, and then burn. 4. The severity of God ; he raineth down fire and brimstone, which is a Map and Type of Hell. *Isa. 30. last, Rev. 21. 15.* The calamities that light upon the Godly, are * a token of Heaven ; namely, as they are wont to purifie us from sin ; but those on the wicked are Types of Hell, preambles to future woes ; as darkness on the *Egyptians* was a figure of utter darkness : So these were first turned to destruction, and then into Hell ; 'tis sad to think of the judgment past ; worse, of judgment to come.

* Phil. 1. 28.

Thus God delighteth to make those that have been examples to others in sinning, examples to them in punishment.

VERS. 8.

Likewise also these filthy Dreamers, defile the flesh, despise dominion, and speak evil of Dignities.

IN this Verse you have the *Apodosis* of the former instance: [*likewise*] is the *Adverb*, that implieth the Connection between the two terms of a comparison; they perished that went after strange flesh; so these filthy Dreamers that defile the flesh, &c. shall perish. In the words you may Observe, 1. A Description of their persons, [*filthy Dreamers.*] 2. A discovery of their sins, two are mentioned in this Verse. 1. *ἀκαθάρτια*, their impurity [*they defile the flesh.*] 2. *ἀταξία*, their tumultuous carriage towards superiours, expressed in two phrases. First, *They despised Dominion.* Secondly, *They speak evil of Dignities:* What these two phrases import is some question; some think the first noteth their judgement and affliction; the second their speech and practice. Some think two kinds of Government are here understood, and refer *despising of dominion* to contempt of Magistracy and publick Government; and *speaking evil of dignities* to the private Government of Masters, 1 Tim. 6. 1, 2. which was also despised by these wretches, under the pretence of Christian liberty. Others more properly understand the first Clause of *Civil Government*, usually expressed in Scripture by *κυριεύειν*, or *Domination*; and *speaking evil of Dignities* is fitly referred to the traducing and opposing of Government and Governours Ecclesiastical, as *Apostles, Pastors, Teachers, and Elders.* The Officers of the Church are called *δοξα*, the glory of Christ, 2 Cor. 8. 23. and what we translate [*speak evil of dignities,*] is in the original [*speak evil of Glories,*] but of this more anon.

Let me open the words: [*likewise,*] In the original there are many words, *ὅτις μὲν τοις ἑστέροις*, *likewise, notwithstanding;* that is, though there be so many, and such apparent instances of Gods judgements, and those set before us for an example; yet they being blinded with their wicked passions, are not afraid, but boldly cast themselves upon the hazard of the same ruine.

[*Filthy Dreamers*,] the word in the original is *ὑπνωτισμένοι*, *Observat. 2.* lead, inspired, or acted by Dreams, or deluded by Dreams. *Beza* rendereth it, *Sopiti*, being lulled asleep, as noting their security: I suppose rather the *dotage of error*, by which they were as it were bewitched and enchanted; our translation seemeth to carry it another way, as applying it to *nocturnal pollutions*, because dreaming is joyned with *defiling the flesh*: And *Peter* chargeth these persons with rolling their fancies upon unclean objects, 1 *Pet.* 2. 14. or possibly it may be taken literally, the persons here noted pretending to dreams, inspired by *associate* and *assistant spirits*: See *Enseb. lib. 4. cap. 7.* The next phrase is [*defile the flesh*,] that is, pollute themselves with libidinous practices, 2 *Pet.* 2. 10. *They walked after the flesh, in the lust of uncleanness*; and that under a pretence of the Gospel, *Vide Irenaeum passim de Hæc. Valentin.* The *Nicbolaitans* taught community of Wives, and that it was an indifferent thing to commit Adultery, *Rev.* 2. 6. 14. The *Gnosticks* gave themselves up to all manner of prodigious and incestuous pollutions: whence, from their obscenity and beastly life, they were called *Horborites*. See again, *Enseb. lib. 4. cap. 7. Epiphan. hæc. 26.* How many ways they did *defile the flesh*, we cannot with modesty express: the Heathens who made no distinction, charg'd these impurities upon the Christians in the general, as if they used the unlawful company of their Mothers and Sisters, &c. The next phrase is, [*despise Dominion*] *ἀδυσέβει*; the word *ἀδυσέβει*, signifieth to remove a thing out of its place with some scorn and indignation, and so it implieth their utter enmity to civil policy and government, 2 *Pet.* 2. 10.

Observat. 3. *They despise Government; presumptuous are they, and self-willed:* [*αὐσεβεία, Dominion*] some apply this to the Dominion of Christ, which by their fables of the *Æones*, or Lords, Rulers, they did set at naught; but of that in the fourth Verse: but now he speaks of the Government of Men; and there is an emphasis in the word [*αὐσεβεία, Dominion*,] which is more then if he had said, *αὐτοί, Rulers*; for they did not only despise their Magistrates, or men invested with Superiority, but *Magistracy* it self, as a thing unfitting for believers, and such as were made free by Christ, to indure: The last part of the charge is, [*They speak evil of Dignities*,] or, as 'tis in the original, [*blaspheme Glories*,]

Glories, by which some understand *Angels*, as *Clement Alexandrinus*; these impure Hereticks devising things unworthy, and mis-beseeming the *Angels*; rather I suppose it implyeth their scorn, curses, and reproaches cast upon the Officers of the Church, who are the *Glory of Christ*; and the practice is afterward compared with the rebellion of *Corah*, who rose up, not only against *Moses* but *Aaron*, *Numb. 11*. In the whole you have a lively description of our modern *Ranters*, *Levellers*, *Familists*, *Quakers*; who by dreams are led on to defile the flesh, and to despise all Authority, both in Church and Common-wealth, and that with bitter curses and evil speakings; so that our days afford us but too clear a comment on the expressions of this Scripture: 'tis sadly fulfilled before our eyes! I come to the Observations.

From this [*Filthy Dreamers*] Note, That the erroneous Observat. 1. thoughts of wicked men are but a Dream. 'Tis but Fryer-like, to follow an illusion too far; only a little for illustration: wicked men are Dreamers: 1. In regard of their state and condition; every carnal man is in a state of a deep sleep, *Isa. 29. 10*: snorting upon the bed of ease, without any sense of the danger of their condition; as *Jonah* in the Ship was found asleep when the storm arose; they sleep, but their damnation sleepeth not, *2 Pet. 2. 3*. 2. In regard of the suitableness between their vain thoughts and a dream. A dream, you know, tickleth with a false delight, and deceiveth with a vain hope.

1. Tickleth with a false delight; they hug a cloud (as we say) instead of *Juno*, and embrace the contentments and pleasures of the World instead of the *tyrannies*; a carnal mans running from pleasure to pleasure is but a sweet dream; a fit of mirth and pleasure while conscience is asleep; * they walk in a vain shadow * *Psal. 39. 6*. they imagine a great deal of felicity and contentment in their condition; but when they come to * warm themselves by their own sparks, they lye down in sorrow. * *Isa. 30. 12*.

2. Deceiveth with a vain hope; as where the Prophet compareth the dream of the enemies of the Church to the dream of a night-vision, *Isa. 29. 7. 8*. And it shall be as an hungry man dreameth, and behold he eateth, but he awaketh and his soul is empty: or when as a thirsty man dreameth, and behold he drinketh, but he awaketh, and behold he is faint, and his soul hath appetite:

So 'tis with them, all their hopes are dashed in an instant : the foolish Virgins slept, *Mat. 25.* and when they slept they dreamed that the door of grace would still be open to them, but they found it shut : many flatter themselves with *fair hopes*, till they awake in flames ; but then all is gone.

Take heed of being deceived by your own dreams , and the fictions of your own brain : there are no dreams so foolish as those we dream waking ; as *Epiphanius* saith of the *Gnosticks* : 'twas not *ὑπνιάσις τοῦ ὕπνου* , a sleeping Dream that they were guilty of ; but *Ἀνελογία ψυχῆς ὡς δι' ὕπνου Ἀλογούμενος* , the dotage of their minds, putting them upon fancies, as monitrous and incoherent as mens thoughts in a dream ; waking dreams are most pernicious : There are two sorts of these dreams, 1. Dreams in point of opinion ; when we hug error instead of truth. 2. Dreams in point of hope ; when we cherish presumption in stead of faith.

* *Mundus se-
nescens patitur
phantasim.*
Galen.

1. *Dreams in opinion*, which are very rife now ; the * old world is apt to dote : Idle and ungrounded notions , how plausible soever, are but the Dreams of a misty, sleepy brain : To prevent these, take these Rules. 1. If you would beware of Dreams, beware of a blind mind ; men sleep in the dark , and in sleep fancy gets the start of Reason ; indistinct thoughts do easily dispose to error ; and an half light will certainly abuse you ; the simple believeth every word, *Prov. 14. 15.* 2. Suffer not your selves to be blinded : 1. Not by vile affections ; men would fain have that true which is pleasing, and most accommodate to their own interests : vile affection taketh away the light of reason, and leaveth us only the pride of reason : and therefore none so confident and touchy in their opinions, as they that are misted by lusts and interests ; how easily do we exasperate our minds , and invent prejudices against an hated truth : if the weights be equal, yet if the ballances be not equal, wrong will be done ; when the heart is biased before the search, and swayed with some carnal desire or interest, the judgment is obscured, and cannot consider of the weight of what is alledged ; there is an Idol in the heart, *Ezek. 16. 4.* 2. By vulgar prejudice ; that the Devil may keep the world asleep , 'tis his usual trick to burden the ways of God with clamour and vulgar prejudice ; a dream or lye dareth not combat with truth in open field, and there-fore

fore fortifieth against it with *popular arguments*, that the ways of God may be *suspected* rather than *tryed*; and usually it falleth out, that error is more specious at the *first blush*; Gods providence suffering his own ways to be under the *cross*, and the *worlds displeasure*: now in such a case men keep at a distance, and are loath to search, lest they meet with *trouble of conscience*, for not obeying the truth; or *trouble from the world*, for crossing their customs and fashions. 3. By *personal admiration*; in spiritual things we learn to dream from one another, *Deut. 13. 3. Zach. 10. 2.* No man must be set up in Gods chair, and their dictates followed, as if they were infallible:

3. *Study the Word*, else there is no light in what is brought to you, 'tis but only a dream and dorage of mens brains; and the closer you keep to the *Letter* of the Word, the better: many are perverted by *mystical interpretations*, when men bring that to the Word which they do not find there; the Letter must not be receded from, as long as 'tis capable of any commodious interpretation: now this Word must be *hidden in the heart*, *Psal. 119. 9. and dwell in us richly*, *Col. 3. 16.* Isa. 8. 21.

2. There are *dreams* in point of hope; and so, 1. Some wholly mistake in the object, and dream of an *eternal happiness* in *temporal enjoyments*, *Psal. 49. 11. So Luke 12. 19. Rev. 18. 9.* 2. Others dream of attaining the end without using the *means*; they live in sin, and yet hope to dye comfortably, and go to Heaven at length for all that, as if it were but an easie and sudden leap, from *Dalilahs lap* to *Abrahams bosome*, and the *pleasures of sin for a season* would be no hinderance to the enjoyment of the *pleasures at Gods right hand for evermore*. A vain Dream, see *Luke 16. 25. and James 5. 5.* 3. Others mistake about the *means*; because they have a *cold form*, they are apt to be conceited of their spiritual condition and estate, *Rev. 3. 17.* If you would not Dream in this kind, *examine your hearts often*; examination is like a rubbing of the eyes after sleep, and reviving of conscience, the recollection of our dreams; a man laugheth at his dreams when he is awake, and fancy is cited before the tribunal of God, vain apprehensions flie away. Again, be *sober and watchful*, *1 Pet. 5. 9. 2 Thess. 5. 6. Confessing sin*, 'tis telling our dream when we are awake and come to our selves; From
Jer. 31. 17.

Anima qua
fornicata est &
Deo casta esse
non possit.
Aug.

From that [*defile the flesh*] Observe, That dreams of error dispose to practices of sin and uncleanness; and impurity of Religion is usually joyned with uncleanness of Body: which cometh to pass, partly by the just judgment of God, who punisheth spiritual fornication with bodily, Hosea 4. 12. 13. They have gone a whoring from their God, therefore their Daughters shall commit whoredom, and their Spouses adultery: This is Gods course, that the *ediousness* of the one may make them see the *heinousness* of the other: see *Rom.* 1. 24. Partly by the * influence of error; it perverteth the heart; a frame of truth preieveth the awe of God in the soul; and a right belief maketh the manners *Orthodox*: all sins are rooted in wrong thoughts of God, 3. Ep. John 11. Either in *unbelief* or *misbelief*; *unbelief* is the Mother of sin, and *misbelief* the Nurse of it; it springeth from *distrust*, and is countenanced by *error*; Partly, because the *design* of most errours is to put the soul into a liberty which God never allowed; some errours come from the *pride of reason*, because it will not vail and strike sail to faith; but most come from *vile affection*; a carnal heart must be gratified with a carnal Doctrine, 2 Pet. 2. 18. They promise liberty, &c. Errors are but a device to cast off Christs yoke, and to lull the conscience asleep in a course of disobedience.

Well then, avoid *error of judgment* if you would avoid *filthiness of conversation*; men first dream, and then *defile the flesh*; *abominable impurities* (unless temper of nature, and posture of interests hinder) are the usual fruit of *evil opinions*: Truth is the root of holiness; *sanctifie them by thy truth, thy word is truth*, Joh. 17. 17. Gods blessing goeth with his own Doctrine, 2 Pet. 1. 22.

Again, Those that have taken up the profession of a right way of Religion should beware of staining it by such kind of practices; nothing maketh the ways of God suspected so much as the scandals of those that profess to walk in them; *walk in the light as children of the light*, Ephesians 5. otherwise you will be a reproach to the truth, and deprive it of its testimony.

Again, Observe, That sin is a defilement, it staineth and darkeneth the glory of a man, *Mat.* 23. 26. this defilement was implied

in the washings of the Ceremonial Law and in Baptism; we are washed as soon as we are born, because we are sinners as soon as we are born; surely they that glory in sin do but glory in their own shame; 'tis but as if a man should boast of his own dung, and count his spittle an Ornament, when you count graceless swearing, mightiness to drink, revenge, pride, a glory to you, do you the same: there is nothing maketh us stink in Gods nostrils but sin, *Psal. 14 3. They are altogether become filthy*, so much sin as you have about you, so much nativeness; gain is pleasant to those that are taken with that kind of lust; but the Scripture calleth it *filthy lucre* 1 Timothy 3. 3. all sins are compared to *filthy garments*, Zechariah. 3. 4. Jude 19. and *Isaiah 3c. 22.* desire to be washed, and that thoroughly, *Psalms 51. 2.*

Again observe, *That of all sins, the sin of uncleanness or unlawful Copulation is most defiling*: it defileth the whole man, but chiefly the body, and therefore 'tis said [they defile the flesh] it staineth the soul with filthy thoughts, *Math. 15. 20.* it staineth the Name, *Prov. 33.* But in a singular manner it pollureth the body, 1 Cor. 6. 18. in all other outward sins, though the body be the Instrument, yet it is not the Object of them; all other sins do abuse *objectum extra posuim* (as Piscator explaineth it) as a Drunkard, Wine; an Epicure, Meats; a Worldling, Riches; all these are Objects without us: but here the body is not only the Instrument, but the Object, *Rom. 17. 24. God gave them up to uncleanness to dishonour their own bodies.* So see 1 Thess. 4. 4. it wasteth the strength and beauty of the body, *Prov. 5. 9, 10, 11.* hindreth our serviceableness, and doth not consider that this body is Consecrated to God, *Rom. 1. 2. 1. and 1 Cor. 6. 15. a Temple of the Holy Ghost*, 1 Cor. 6. 19. interested in hopes of Glory, *Phil. 3. 21.* and therefore puts it to so vile an use as to be an instrument of lust. Christians, shall those * eyes which are consecrated to God to behold his works be windows to let in sin? that body which is the holy Ghosts Temple, be made the Chamber of a Harlot? and so wasted in the service of lust, as to become a clog to us, and wholly useless, as to any gracious purposes: are not your beauty, health, strength, concerns too good to be spent upon so vile an interest? Take heed then of all Uncleanness, both Conjugal, consisting in

Observat. 4.

* 1 Pet. 3. 14

excess, and immoderations of Lust in the married Estate; *si vinum ex Apothecâ tuâ, &c.* You may not be drunk with your own wine; nor quench the vigour of Nature by excess in those pleasures which the Lawes of God and Men do allow you; and also of uncleanness *Adulterium*, which is more brutish, when men scatter their lusts promiscuously without confinement to an Object.

Observat. 5. From that [*Despise Dominion*] Observe, that *Errours*, especially such as tend to sensualitie, make men unruly and *Animagistratical*. Dreamers that do desile themselves do also despise *Dominion*; Now this cometh to pass, partly from the permission of Gods wile and just Providence, who suff'reth such miscarriages to awaken the Magistrate to a care of Truth, if not in zeal for Gods glory, yet out of a sence of his own interest, and upon reason of State, the Common-wealth being troubled by those who first began to trouble the Church, *ἡ δὲ τὰ θεία ζευζυγία, πολλὰ ἀναμίσγον ἀλλοτριονομεῖ*; New Doctrines put men upon an itch after new Lawes, and false Religions are usually turbulent; partly because persons loose and erroneous would free themselves from all awe, both of God and Man, as 'tis said of the unjust Judge, that he feared neither God nor man, Luke 18.

So with those men, Error taketh off the dread of God, and sedition the dread of the Magistrate, that so they may more freely desile the flesh. God hath two Deputies to keep a sinner under awe, Conscience and the Magistrate; now false doctrine benummeth Conscience, and then that all authority may be laid aside, the rights of the Magistrate are invaded, that as Conscience may not stand in the way of their lust, so not the Magistrate in the way of their sin, that there were anciently such libertines in the Church, appeareth by Gal. 5. 13. and 1 Pet. 2. and 1 Cor. 16. 7. 20, 21, 23, 23. vain man would fain be free and yokelesse, neither would he have his Heart subject to God, nor his Actions to mans Censure: partly, because all Errours are rooted in obstinacy, and that will bewray its self, not onely in Divine and Spirituall, but in Civil things, See 2 Peter, 2. 10. But chiefly, them that walk after the Flesh in the Lust of uncleanness: Presumptuous are they, and self-willed; they are not afraid to speak evil of Dignities. Usually Errours fear the Consci-

conscience, and give the sinner a front and boldnesse; so that God is not onely dishonoured, but civil societies outu bed; as Nazianzen observeth of the *Arians*; they began in blasphemous language against Christ, but ended in tumultuous carriage against the peace of the Common-wealth; for * (saith he) now shall we hope that they will spare men, that would not spare God? Often it falleth our, that they that please not God are also contrary to all men, 1 Thess. 2. 15. Tully an Heathen observeth the same, *Pietate adversos Deos sublatâ fides etiam & societas humani generis, &c.* Partly, because opposition to Magistracy is a kind of indirect blow and aim at God; and that either as 'tis his ordinance, Rom. 13. or a kind of resemblance of his glory; I have said, ye are Gods, Psalm 84.5. So that 'tis a contempt of God in his image and picture; look as under the Law God forbade men cruelty to the beasts, as not to destroy the Dam from the Young, to seeth the Kid in the Mothers milk, &c. that such kind of Prohibitions might be as a fence and raille about the life of man; so respect to Magistracy is a kind of fence about his own Dignity and divine Glory: Magistrates being representative God, *ἐκὼν ὁ Βασιλεὺς ἔστιν ἐμψυχὸς Θεὸς*; and therefore through their sides they strike at God himself. Partly, because the end of Magistracy is to suppress evil; an indefinite speech is equivalent to an universal, in a matter of necessary duty, and the universal particle is expressed elsewhere, Prov. 20. 8. *A King that sitteth upon the Throne of judgement shall remove away all evil with his eyes: all evil that falleth under his cognizance, whether it be of a Civil, or Spiritual concernment; we must not limit and distinguish where the Word doth not; I know there be some that do defalcate and cut off a great part of that duty which belongeth to the Magistrate, confining his care onely to things of a civil concernment, but preposterously, truths according to godlinesse, belonging also to his inspection; upon which ground we are bound to pray for them, that they may come to the knowledge of the truth, 2 Tim. 2.2. and that under them we may lead a quiet life in all godlinesse and honesty; where it is plainly implied, that the converted Magistrate is to look to the countenance and maintenance of godlinesse as well as honesty. Well then, sensual Hereticks being doubly obnoxious, as sensual, and as venting errors, no wonder that they rise up in defiance of Gods Ordinance:*

* τὰς ὁ ἀν-
δραῖς ἐμα-
λου ἐπίσταται
ὅτι τὸς θε-
οῦ ὁ μὴ θε-
ομαρτυροῖ.
Nazian.
Orat. 25.

Rom. 13.5.

Use 1. It sheweth us the evil of inordinate lustings; we may learn hence, *whence they proceed, and whither they tend*; they proceed from the pride and obstinacy of error: Men dream, and are then licentious, and it tendeth to the casting off of all duty to God and Man; nip this disposition in the bud; 'tis in all our natures; Man is born like the wild asses colt, Job 11. 12. not onely for rudeness of understanding, but untamednesse of affection: we love to break through all bonds and restraints, as if none were Lord over us, Psalm 12. 3.

Use 2. It informeth us what will be the issue when libertinism aboundeth; even an utter confusion. See *Socrates Scholast. lib. 3. Eccles. 4. 11. in poem. Non nunquam tumultum Ecclesiarum antegressi, reipublica autem confusiones consecutae sunt.* The ruine of the Weale publick is brought on by pestilent and evil doctrines. So our Divines at the Synod of Dort. *Cavendum est, ne qui magistratum connivens res novas in Ecclesia moliamur, eodem etiam repugnante idem in republica efficiant.* Tully in his Book *De legibus*, saith, That the glory of Greece presently declined, when the people were given *malis studiis, malisque doctrinis, to evil manners, and evil opinions*; let us lay these things to heart: I do not love to inveigh against the times, and to indulge the petulancy of a mistaken zeal; but the Kings danger made Cræsus dumb son to speak.

Use 3. It may take off the prejudice that is often cast upon Religion, and the true wayes of God; 'tis not truth that troubleth Israel, but error; 1 Kings 18. 18. *I have not troubled Israel, but thou, and thy Fathers house, in that ye have forsaken the Commandments of the Lord*; it's an old slander, that strict Religion is no friend to Common-wealthe: as soon as Christianity began to fly abroad in the world, it was objected against her, as if it were prejudicial to civil power and greatness, thereby to defeat her of the patronage of Princes, and to hinder them from becoming nursing Fathers, Isa. 49. 25. Magistracy being that power which is best able to suppress or advance Religion: the Devil striveth all that he can to incense it against her: there is a natural and wakeful jealousy in Princes over their Dignities and Prerogatives, and therefore the enemies of the Church have ever sought occasion to represent the people of God as enemies to their just power; So Christ was accused, Luke 23. 2. and Paul, Acts.

ACTS 24, 5. But altogether without cause; 'tis true, if Religion be not kindly received it bringeth a judgement there where 'tis rendered; as the Ark where it was irreverently handled brought a plague upon the *Bethshemites*, 1 Sam. 6. 19. but yet a blessing upon the house of *Obed-Edom*; so, Religion where it is worthily treated, bringeth a blessing, otherwise a judgement: let the world say what it will, 'tis a friend to *Magistracy*; partly, by its commands enforcing civil duties by a sacred bond and obligation, See *Prov.* 24. 21. *Matth.* 23. 21. 1 *Pet.* 2. 17. *Eccles.* 8. 2. Partly, by its influence, meekning the hearts of men, and obliging them to faithfulness, * *Those that are faithful to God, I shall expect them to be faithful to me* (said *Constantine's* Father) certainly none live so sweetly under the same government as those that are united in the same faith, or cemented together with the same blood of Christ. Partly, by the indulgence of Gods providence, who is wont to favour those States, where true Religion is countenanced and vigorously owned; Oh that our Magistrates would regard this; their wisdom lieth in kissing the Son, *Psal.* 2. 10. Christ came not to gain persons, but Nations, to his obedience; and the more that is effected, though it be but by a publick profession, the more safety may they expect; 'tis but a necessary thankfulness of the powers of the world to him, to whom they owe their Crowns, *Prov.* 8. 17. Let us pray for them that God would raise their zeal, and make them more cordial in the support of Religion. An Heathen said, *aut undique religionem tolle, aut usque quaque conserva*, either wholly abandon Religion, or maintain it more entirely.

It sheweth us what little reason Magistrates have to countenance, and spread their skirt over obstinate and impure Hereticks; such spirits being usual y most opposite to Magistracy. They do but nourish a Snake in their own bowels, and cherish a Faction, that in time will eat out their bowels: were there no respects of Religion, but onely those of Civil Policy, they should not be so sleepy in this case; but you will say, is it lawful for them to intermeddle in matters of Religion, and to use any compulsive power? I answer, yes verily; they bear not the sword in vain; we have frequent instances in the Word, of good Kings, whose zeal is commended for so doing, and frequent injunctions: also to this purpose, the Levites are commended for assist-

* οὗτοι γὰρ ἂν
πότε βασιλεὺς
πίστιν εὐλαξέ-
αι τὸς τοῦ τῶ
κρίστου ἀλόν-
τας ἀγνώμο-
νας. Vid. Euseb. lib. 2. de

Use 4.

ing *Moses* in the execution of those that worshipped the *Casse*, *Exod.* 32. 26, 27, 28. *Abraham* was to command his Children, *Gen.* 18. 29. *Asa* commanded *Judah* to worship God; and the thing was right in the eyes of the Lord, *2 Kings* 14. 23, 24. So see *2 Kings* 15. 23. and *Esra* 10. 8. So *2 Kings* 34. 32, 33. And that promise *Isa.* 43, 23. I know I touch the fore of this age, and that this is a truth much prejudiced; therefore I shall first remove the prejudices, and then state the question.

* *Augustine* changed his mind twice, and was at last for compulsion.

1. Remove the prejudices; The first is taken from the *Fathers* or *Primitive Christians*, who almost generally expresse themselves against planting Religion by the Sword and compulsive force; *defendenda est Religio, non occidendo sed monendo, non servitia sed patientia*, so *Lactantius*; and suitably others; I answer, were Religion now to be planted, these sayings would take place; *Pagans* are not to be compelled, but enlightened, taught, not destroyed; and yet in such a case 'tis a question not easily resolved, whether the Magistrate, if he had power, were not bound to compel his people, though professed *Pagans*, to hear or attend upon the Ministry of the Word, it being the ordinary means of working faith. *Augustine* determineth, that a Christian in such a case should improve his power for Christ. *Felix necessitas quæ ad meliora nos cogit, foris invenitur necessitas, & nascitur intus voluntas*; and a little after, *non quia cogantur reprehendant, sed qui cogantur attendant*; 'tis a favour that the Magistrate will take care to bring them to the means of salvation. Again, in such a case they are to be kept from scandalizing and blaspheming the true Religion; that's the least a Magistrate can do for Christ: But where a people are *Christianized*, and do profess the true Religion, they should not be set free to *Atheism*, *Error*, and *Apostacy*.

2. Another prejudice is, that the examples before mentioned are brought from the Old Testament, and so properly to the politic, of the Jews. I answer, some alledged were before *Moses* Law, as that of *Abrahams* and *Jacobs* commanding his family to put away their Idols, *Genesis* 35. 2. And the Injunctions in the Old Testament were built upon Reasons of immutable equity, as Gods glory, the danger of Infidelity, &c. and so concern us as well as them, and the thing in question is agreeable to the light of Nature

ture, there being instances of *Pagan Princes*, who were so far convinced of their duty to the true God, that they enjoyed his Worship, punishing the contempt thereof; See *Ezra* 6. 11. & *Ezra* 7. 16. and *Daniel* 3. 29. The *Gentiles* by the light of Nature saw it to be suitable and agreeable to right Reason: *Arist. Polit. lib. 7. cap. 8.* saith, the first thing that falleth under a Magistrate's care is *ὁ δὲ τὸ εὖ τὸν θεὸν ἐκτρέφειν*, a care of Divine Worship. The *Athenians* banished *Protagoras*, for speaking doubtfully, and by way of extenuation, of their Religion, and burnt his Books: besides all this, the Reason why we have only Presidents in the Old Testament, is, because the people of the *Jews* were the *only State* that were acquainted with the knowledge of the true God: we have some Prophecies that the like should be done in the New, *Isa.* 49. 2. 3. and *Zech.* 13. which concerneth Gospel-times, *Isa.* 60. 10. *Revelations* 21. 24. we were worse provided for than they were in the Old Testament, if men that had the *Plague-scar* of Heresie running upon them, should without restraint be permitted to come into all companies.

3. Another prejudice is, 'twill make men Hypocrites; I Answer with *Athanasius*, would to God all were got so far as Hypocrites, it would certainly be better for the Christian world; but however, duties must not be left undone for ill consequences:

4. Prejudice, this will make way for *persecution*, and the calamities of the Godly upon every change of the Princes mind. I Answer, if the Lord see persecution necessary for the Church, we must endure it, and so we shall be gainers, both by good Princes and bad: by the persecution of evil Princes Truth is made glorious; by the ministry of the good, error is suppressed and discountenanced; God would oblige us the more to pray for them in power, *Psalms* 72. 1. and *1 Timothy* 2. 2. and he hath promised to hear such Prayers, and provide *Nursing Fathers* for the Church. Sometimes a wicked Magistrate understanding his duty may by the over-ruling power of God in his conscience, be withheld from persecuting the Truth, yea carried out to the suppression of error. When *Paulus Sarmatenus* revolted from the Orthodox Christian Faith, and would yet retain the Bishoprick of *Antioch*, the business was brought to *Aurelianus*, a Pagan Emperor, who removed him.

Secondly,

* Ex officio
carnificum so-
nant argumen-
taz; quos ser-
monibus desin-
pere non possunt
gladii clamant
esse foriendos.
Ambros.

Secondly, I shall state the Point, and shew you how far compulsion is necessary. 1. The Magistrate should use no compulsion before *care had for better information*, and resolution of the doubting Conscience, otherwise the practice were fell and cruel, like that of false Religions that brook no contradiction; consciences scrupulous must not be too hardly dealt withal: * to answer arguments by a Prison, or the Fire, is a *Popish Topick*; and to supply in *rage* what wanteth in *strength of reason*, and *clearness of light*, is but a *butcherly violence*; punishment and compulsion should not be hastned, as long as there appeareth a desire to be informed with meek endeavours after satisfaction. The Apostle *Paul* is for two *Admonitions* before *Church censure*, Titus 2. 10. And the *censure of the Magistrate* should not precede that of the Church. 2. In things indifferent, Christian toleration and forbearance take place; all men never were, nor ever will be, in this world, of one and the same opinion, no more then of the same feature and complexion. There is a due latitude of allowable differences, wherein the strong should bear with the weak, *Rom. 15. 1. Eph. 4. 2: Gal. 6. 1.* There are some lesser mistakes of Conscience, and infirmities incident to all men; namely, such as are consistent with *Faith*; the main and fundamental truths and principles of salvation and *charity*, as not tending to foment *Faction* in the Church, or *Sedition* in the Common-wealth; but if either of these limits be transgressed, circumstances may make these lesser things intolerable; as *Paul* withstood *Peter* to the face, though otherwise he did not count the matter great, *Gal. 2. 11.* yet when it was urged to the scandal of the Churches, he thought it worthy of a Contest: and here it belongeth to Christian Princes, as to defend *truth*, so to see that *Peace* be not violated for Rites and Ceremonies, and lesser differences that lie far from the heart of Religion. I am persuaded that *want of condescension to Brethren* hath brought all this confusion upon us, &c. 3. A gross error kept secret, cometh not under the Magistrates cognizance; but the diffusion and dissemination of errors he must take notice of; as when men infect others, and openly blaspheme Christian Doctrine, he beareth not the sword in vain: The mind and conscience, as to any power under God, is *sui juris*, thoughts are free; 'tis a saying in the Civil Law, *Cogitationum penam ne-*

mo patitur, all command is exercised about such things as fall within the knowledge of him that commandeth; now God only knoweth the heart; *quis mihi imponat necessitatem credendi quod nolim* (saith *Lactantius*) *vel quod velim non credendi*. *Theodosius* and *Valentinianus*, in their Law concerning the Heretick, give this limitation, *sibi tantummodo nocitura sentiat, aliis obfutura non pandat*. Subscriptions and Inquisitions into mens consciences we cannot but justly condemn. 4. Errors, according to their nature and degree, merit a different punishment, *Jude* 9. and *Ezra* 7. 26. 5. Blasphemy, Idolatry, and gross Heresie, are to be put into the same rank with gross, vicious, actions, and supposed (if entertained after the receiving of the truth) to be done against light and conscience. *Paul* saith of the Heretick, that he is *autoratūer*®, after due admonitions, *Titus* 3. 11. Therefore in some cases these may be punished with death, as *Baals* Prophets were slain, *1 Kings* 18. 40. and *Exod.* 21. 20. *Lev.* 24. 16. But of the whole Question, elsewhere.

Again, I observe from the same clause, *That 'tis a sin to de-* *Observat. 6.*
spise Dominions; for 'tis here charged upon these Seducers. 'Tis a sin, because 'tis against the injunctions of the Word, *Rom.* 13. 1. *Titus* 3. 1. We are apt to forget our civil duties, or to count them Arbitrary, as if the same Authority had not established the second Table as well as the first: and 'tis a sin, because Magistracy is Gods Ordinance; the general institution of it is of God, though the particular constitution of it be of man: Compare *Rom.* 13. 1. with *1 Pet.* 2. 13. Government it self is of God; but this or that special manner or form of government is not determin'd by God, which is the difference between Civil and Ecclesiastical Government; for there the particular form is specified, as well as the thing it self appointed. Again, 'tis a sin, because dominion preserveth humane Societies; so that we should trespass against the common good and publick order, if we should despise this help; yea against the Law of our own Natures, man being by nature a sociable creature.

Well then, let us obey every Ordinance of man for the Lords sake: The publick welfare is concerned in our obedience, as also the honour of Religion, both which should be very dear to one that seareth God: The publick welfare; better bear many in-

conveniencies, then embroil the Country in War and Blood: We are bidden be subject to *εκκλησίαις*, to the froward, 1 *Pet.* 2. 18. And the *honour of Religion*; God will have the world know, that Christianity is a friend to *civil policy*; see 1 *Pet.* 2. 15. and *Matth.* 7. 27. We learn from hence too, that they are but Libertines, that think that Religion frees them from the subjection which they owe to God or man; it doth not exempt us from our duty, but enable us to perform it: many take such a liberty in civil things, that they begin to grow contemptuous even in *divine*; and so cast off *Gods yoke*, as well as the Magistrates.

Observat. 7. The last expression is that [*Speak evil of Dignities,*] or of [*Glories,*] by which probably *Church-Officers* are intended, such being spoken against in that age, *John Ep.* 3. 10. and expressed by the word [*Glories,*] a term given both to the *Apostles* and other *Officers of the Church*. Note, There is a *respect due to persons invested with Church-power*. This is established by *Gods Ordinance*, and therefore should not be set at naught; neither should the persons invested with it, be *evil spoken of*; that *obedience* is required to them, see *Heb.* 13. 17. and *respect and honour*, See 1 *Thess.* 12. 13. and 1 *Tim.* 5. 17. that they should not be lightly spoken of, 1 *Tim.* 5. 19. though for their persons and outward estate they are *mean and despicable*, yet they are called to an *high employment*, and have the promise of a *great power and presence* with them, *Mat.* 16. 19. *John* 20. 23. Their regular proceedings are ratified in the Court of Heaven; we are fallen into an age wherein no persons are more contemptible than *Ministers*; nothing is valued then *Church-Authority*: 'tis become the *eye-sore of the times*; not to speak of those *barking Shmeis*, the *Quakers*, and their foul-mouth'd language, them by the *Father of lies*; surely others have not such a reverence of *Gods Ordinance*, as they should have.

VERSE IX.

Yet Michael the Arch-Angel, when contending with the Devil, he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, the Lord rebuke thee.

THE Apostle had charged the Seducers, against whom he wrote, with opposition of Magistracy, and contemptuous speaking against those lights which God had set in the Church ; he now cometh to aggravate their *effrontery* and *impudence*, by the carriage of *Michael the Arch-Angel* towards the *Devil*. In the Comparison there is an Argument *a majori ad minus*, from the greater to the less, which is evidently seen in all the circumstances of the Text.

1. In the persons contending, *Michael the Arch-Angel* with the *Devil* : If *Michael* so Excellent in Nature, so high in Office, contending with *Sathan*, an impure Spirit already judged by God, used such modesty and awe, who are they, sorry Creatures, that dare despise persons invested with the Dignity and Height of Magistracy !

2. There is an aggravation from the Cause [*When he disputed with him about the body of Moses,*] A matter just, and in which the mind of God was clearly known ; and dare they speak evil of things they know not ? that is, in matters so far above their reach, to take upon them to ensure and determine :

3. There is an aggravation taken from the disposition of the Angel [*He durst not bring against him a railing accusation*] His Holyness would not permit him to deal with the Devil, in an *undecent* and *injurious* manner. But these rashly belch out their reproaches and curses against Superiours without any fear.

4. In the manner of speech [*The Lord rebuke thee*] The whole judgement of the Cause is referred to God ; but these *Gnosticks* take upon them, as if the whole judgement or *Things*, *Persons* and *Actions*, were left in their hands, as our modern *Quakers* take upon them to curse, and to pronounce dreadful judgements upon Gods most holy Servants according to their own pleasures.

The sum of the whole is this ; if an *Angel* that is great in power durst not bring against the worst Creatures, in the very heat of contention about a good cause, any undue Language and reproach, certainly, 'tis an horrible impudence in men to speak contemptuously, yea in a cursing and blaspheming manner, of those whom God hath advanced to Superiority in Church or Commonwealth.

This is the sum of the words: but because this Scripture is difficult, before I come to the Observations, I shall premise some explicatory Questions.

Quest. 1. *Whence had the Apostle this story ? the Scriptures making no mention of it ?*

Ans. 1. The substance of it is in Scripture: we read, *Deut. 34. 6. That the body of Moses was secretly buried by the Lord.* but now for the Circumstances of it, he might receive them by Divine Revelation, which are here Authorised and made Scripture, and indeed 'tis usual with the Pen-men of Holy-Writ, to adde such Circumstances as were not mentioned in the place where the History was first recorded ; as in *Exodus* we read of the opposition of the Magicians to *Moses* ; but their names are mentioned, *2 Tim. 3. 8. As Jaanes and Jambres withstood Moses.* The whole story of their contest with him is in the *Talmud*, and in *Apuleius*, and other Histories, we read that these were famous Magicians. So *Psalms 105. 18. we read that Josephs feet were hurt in Fetters, and he was laid in Iron, which in the story in Genesis appeareth not ; so Moses quaking, Heb. 12. 21. and the following of the Water of the Rock, 1 Cor. 10. 1, 2. Those things might be received by Tradition, or Divine Inspiration, or were extant in some known Book and Record then in use. Origen* quoterh a Book *αὐτὸν ἀναστήσει τὸ Μόσιν*, about the assumption of *Moses*, for this History, some remainders of which are in the Books of the Jews unto this day: *Capellus*, I remember repeateth a long tale out of the Book called *Rabbah*, or the Mystical Expositions of the *Pentateuch*, concerning the altercation between *Michael* and *Samael*, or the Arch-Angel and the Devil, about the body, or rather Soul of *Moses*. And how God to save it from *Samael*, sucked out his Soul from the Body by a kiss ; but the story is so fabulous, that I shall not repeat it : see *Cappelli Spiceleg. in locum*, page 128, 129.

Quest. 2.

Quest. 2. *Is this a real History, or an Allusion?*

Ans. 2. There are three Opinions about this. 1. One is, that 'tis a figurative expression of Gods care for his Church; and they that go this way, by the *body of Moses*, understand either the *whole body of the Levitical worship*, or else the *community of Israel* represented in *Joshua the High Priest, who stood before the Angel of the Lord*, *Zeck. 3. 1, 2.* and *Sathan at his right hand ready to resist him*; and the Lord said unto him, the Lord rebuke thee, the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee; In *Joshua* the Levitical worship newly restored is figured, and the *Angel of the Lord, before whom he stood*, is *Christ the Judge, Advocate, and Defender of the Church*; and the Lord, that is, the Lord Christ, called the *Angel* before, purs forth the efficacy of his Mediation against this malicious opposition of Sathan. So some accommodate this Text to the sense of that place; and the main reason is, because of the form here used, *The Lord rebuke thee*: this sense is *arguse*, but not *solid*. *Junius*, who first propounded it, seemeth to distrust it; the reason is of no force; for the same form might be used on divers occasions: and my reasons against it are, because these expressions are *Typical and Visional*; now to make a Type of a Type, especially in the New Testament, which usually explaineth the difficulties of the Old, seemeth irrational; and though by *Michael* Christ may be intended; yet the change from *Joshua* to *Moses* is too much forced.

2. Others conceive that 'tis not an History, but a *Talmudick fiction and Parable*: and that *Jude*, in citing it, doth not approve the Story as true, but onely urgeth it upon them for their instruction, who were mightily pleased with these kind of Fables; as the Fathers, against the Heathens, did often make use of their own Stories and fictions concerning their gods, such condescensions are frequent: But against this opinion, it seemeth to be urged here by way of down right assertion, not as an argument *ad homines*, and by *Peter* on the like occasion, *2 Pet. 2. 11. Whereas Angels that are greater in might and power, bring not a railing accusation against them before the Lord.* I say, he doth not urge it as a *Jewish Fable*, but as a *real Argument*, taken from the nature of the holy Angels.

3. There is another opinion; That it is a *real History*, namely, that the Devil was earnest to discover the place of *Moses*

grave, and to take up his body again, wherein he was resisted by *Michael*, some principal and chief Angel, and his attempts made fruitless, by this holy and modest address to God, *The Lord rebuke thee.*

Quest. 3. *The next question is, who is meant by Michael the Arch-Angel.*

Ans. 3. *Michael* is the name of his Person, and *Arch-Angel* of his Office; *Michael* signifieth, he is the strong God, or who is like the strong God? and therefore some apply it to Jesus Christ, who in many places of Scripture is set forth as head of Angels; see *Ex.* 3. 2. with 4. and *Ex.* 23. 20, 21, 22. *Gen.* 48. 16. and in *Dan.* 12. 1. and *Dan.* 10. 13. Jesus Christ seemeth there to be intended by *Michael*, he being the Prince of Israel. But there is no necessity of interpreting those places in *Daniel*, of Christ; much less is he intended here, it being beneath the dignity of his Person to contend with the Devil; which though he did in his humiliation, *Matth.* 4. yet to do it before, that was unworthy of him; besides that phrase [*He durst not*] is not so applicable to Jesus Christ; and besides, Christ and the Arch-Angel are in Scripture distinguished, yea Peter applyeth this to Angels in general, whereas Angels, 2 *Peter* 2. 11. But you will Object, how can any creature be called *Michael*, equal to God in power and strength?

I Answer, it may be taken absolutely, and so 'tis proper to Christ, who is Gods fellow, *Lech.* 13. 7. 2 Comparatively, and so it may be applyed to him who is highest in dignity among the Creatures, and is next to God in excellency, and strength, and so it may imply the highest Angel, as in Hell there is a *Beelzebub*, or a chief Devil; (therefore 'tis said, *Matthew* 25. *The Devil and his Angels*;) so in Heaven there may be a *Michael*, one highest in order among the blessed Angels.

Quest. 4. *Why should the Devil so earnestly dispute about the body of Moses?*

Ans. 4. The Rabbins, among other of their Fables, interpret it of the desire which the Devil had to destroy *Moses* by death, there being no man like *Moses*, that saw God face to face; therefore his rage was great against him, and he sought to destroy him; and to this purpose apply that of the Psalmist, *Psalms* 37. 1. *The wicked watcheth the righteous, and seeketh to slay*

slay him. Among Christians, some say this striving was before, some after his burial; some before his burial, as Junius, that his body might not be removed out of sight, but he might satisfy his rage and malice upon it, in abusing it. But that is not so probable, the body being suddenly disposed of by God to some secret place of burial.

Some say, after burial the Devil sought to take it up again, and upon that ground arose this contention between him and Michael. But why should the Devil contend so much about the buried body of Moses?

To answer this, we must consider what might be the ends of Gods concealing his burial; possibly this might be one, *Lest in a preposterous zeal they should yield honour to the dead body of such a famous and excellent Prophet*, and so it might become a snare to the people: possibly there might be something Typical in it; the dead body of Moses was buried in an unknown place, lest they should take it up, and carry it into the Land of Canaan, to signify the abolition of the legal Ordinances, under the Evangelick State: so that to revive the Antiquated Ceremonies of the Law now, is but to take up Moses his dead body; Now the Devil may be supposed to contend for the body of Moses, partly out of obstinate curiosity, whereby sinful creatures are strongly inclined to desire things forbidden: Partly to defeat the purposes of God: but chiefly by dead Moses, to set up himself in the hearts of the living, seeking thereby to provoke them to a worship of his relics or remains.

These Questions premised, the Explication of the words is easie, [Michael the Arch-Angel] that is some principal Angel deputed to this Ministry and Service [when he contended with the Devil, διαβόλω διακρινόμενος] the word signifies an altercation or contention in words, a dispute with the Devil [about the body of Moses] about the knowledge of the place of his Burial; [durst not] his fear of God, modesty and meekness would not permit him, [Bring against him a railing accusation] κρίσιν ἐπινεγκὴν βλασφημίας, the judgement of blasphemy, or such unworthy Language as the heat of contention is wont to provoke and extort from us. [But said, The Lord rebuke thee] is a modest referring of the matter to Gods Cognizance, or a Prayer that the Lord would check this malicious opposition.

Observations

Observat. 1. Observations are many. 1. Observe, That to aggravate their virulency, he compares it with the modesty of an Arch-Angel; whence note, *That Pride and Contempt in them of a low degree is lesse tolerable then in those whom God hath advanced to an higher rank and sphere.* Partly, because these have *lesse temptation* to be proud; and when a sin is committed without a temptation, 'tis a sign that the heart is strongly inclined that way; as there needeth no force to make a bowl run down-hill, because of its natural tendency: their wants and meanness should keep them humble; we look that the fire should go out when the fuel is taken away; when men have nothing to be proud of, the want of an opportunity should make men at least forbear the sin. Partly, because they have *more reason* to be humble; as the rich and great have reason to be *thankfull*, so the poor have reason to be *humble*; with a low condition there should be a lowly mind; 'tis better to be of an humble spirit with the lowly, &c. Proverbs 16. 19. Well then, Poverty and Pride are most unsuitable, Pride is allowable in none, but in the poor most prodigious; 'tis an odd sight to see those of the highest Rank to turn *fashionists*, and display the Emblems of their own vanity; but when *servants*, and those of a low degree, put themselves into the Garb, these are prodigies of Pride; as the modesty of the Arch-Angel was an upbraiding to the pride of the *Gnusticks*, so should those that are advanced to the highest degree of honour shame to the meaner sort, with their *comely plainness*. Again, to see men of the greatest insufficiencies humble in title and mind, and denying their great Parts for the sake of the *simplicity of the Gospel*; 'tis a shame that persons of low parts should be puffed up, and appear flaunting in the pomp of words, or blustering in Greek and Latine sentences, as if *all reading and learned worth* were their own; as the Apostle condemned the *Corinthians* for the pompous use of Tongues in the Church, and shameth them by his own example, 1 Cor. 14. 18. *I thank God, I speak with tongues more then they all, yet rather, &c.*

Again, To take down Pride, look to others whom God hath set higher, and yet are *more humble*; as usually the higher the Sun, the less shadows it casteth. Usually Gods children carry a low mind in an high condition, James 1. 10. they are rich, yet *mad,*

made low, that is, lowly. If in the fulness of Riches, Honours, Parts, and Enjoyments, they are so meek and humble, why should I that have less temptations, be more proud? They are *lifted up by God, but not in their own spirits*; I am a worm, in a much lower Sphere, and yet of a prouder heart! they are *affable, meek, modest*, why am I so *ferce and impatient of contradiction*? Once more, If the judgements of God light upon greater Personages for their pride; say, what will become of me? in me 'tis more odious: If God destroy those whose *height is as the height of Cedars*, Amos 2. 9. surely the Reed should tremble: Many times mean and base people that have no tincture of ingenuity, and are of no name or quality in the world, have pride enough to be bitter enemies to Gods children; David saith, Psa. 35. 15. *The abjects gathered themselves together to make Songs against me*; when as God rebuketh Kings for their sakes; If he visit the Throne, will he not visit the Ale-bench? What scorn will he cast upon this *sawcy dust*? these spightful worms that have only malice enough to snarle, and can go no further; If the great men of the earth tremble, shall the bond-men go free? Rev. 16. 15. But chiefly upon this occasion would I commend to you the example of the Lord Christ, to take down pride; this is an example that will shame us indeed, whatever the pride be; are you puffed up with *pride of vain conceit*? Christ stripped himself of all his glory, Phil. 2. 7. with *pride of revenge*? men are loth to strike sail, to seek to an enemy, they scorn it: Jesus Christ, though such an excellent person, loved us first, 1 John 4. 19. sued to his enemies: is it *disdain of our condition*, pride of murmurings? he made himself a worm and no man; and when he was rich in the glory of the God-head, became poor for our sakes; Matth. 10. 24. *The Disciple is not above his Master, nor the servant above his Lord*: if we be scorned, would we be better dealt with than our master was? many times you have seen a Master do the work of a servant, to shame him, so did Christ: do but think of *Christs excellency*, and your own base condition; as here, to shame the *brutish Gnosticks*, the Apostle telleth them, they took more upon them than a glorious Angel.

Again, From the Arch-Angels contending about the body of *Observat. 2.*
Moses: The Devil would discover *Moses* his Grave, and the
 Arch-

Arch-Angel is ready to resist him: The Note is, *That God hath Angels and Arch-Angels, that are always ready to defend a good cause*; They are *many*, the King of Heaven hath a brave Court, Dan. 7. 10. *A thousand thousand minister to him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stand before him*: Christ saith, he could pray for twelve Legions in an instant, Mat 26. 53. Now a Legion in the least computation is six thousand Foot, and seven hundred Horse: they are able, they excell in strength; one Angel slew 185000 in one night, Isa. 37. 36. they are always ready attending on Gods commands, Psal. 103. 20. they rejoyce in names of service, more than names of honour: They are swift in execution, they are described to have *six wings apiece*, Isai. 6. 2. as being at the Lords beck, and ready to execute his Command as soon as they hear the word: All which, First, Informeth us of the danger of wicked men in opposing a good cause; they fight not only against men, but against Angels. 2. That Angels have more to do in humane affairs then we are aware of; there are evil Angels assisting in the Counsels against the Church, and good Angels resisting, in these days of conflict. The Combate is not only between men and men, but between Angels and Angels, Dan. 10. 13. The protection of the holy Angels is invisible, but true and real. 3. Here is comfort to Gods children, when they are embarked in an hazardous, but in a holy business; there are far more with us, then can be against us, 2 Kings 6. 16. there is God the Fathers power on the Churches side; The Son puts forth the strength of his Mediation, Zech. 3. 2. The Spirit comforts and animateth us; and then holy Angels are employed as instruments; The Lord Jesus and his Angels will stick to the Church, when none else dare, Dan. 10. 21. There is none holdeth with me in these things, but Michael your Prince. When all humane strength falleth, Christ by their Ministry can uphold the affairs of the Church; omnipotency is a great deep; usually we look to means, and can better conceive of the operations of finite Creatures, then of the infinite God; therefore doth the Lord represent the help of the Church, as managed by these powerful instruments: only now take heed that you do not betray your succours, nor defraud your selves of their protection. 1. By neglecting to seek to the God of Angels, Dan. 10. 12. From the first day thou didst see
shine

shine heart to understand, and didst chasten thy self before thy God, &c. we are not to pray to them, but for them, that is, for their help, to the Lord. 2. By unwarrantable practises; for then you joyn with Satan to their grief, *Psal.* 34. 7. *The Angel encampeth about them that fear him.* A good cause should be well managed, and then trust God, who, if he seeth fit to glorifie himself by our deliverance, rather than our sufferings, can finde means enough to save us, when men fail.

Observe again, *That Angels have a care not only of the souls, but of the bodies, yea even of the dead bodies of the Saints;* as *Michael* disputed with the Devil about the body of *Moses*. That you may understand the particular care which the Angels have about the people of God, I shall open it to you in several Propositions.

Observat. 3.

1. 'Tis certain, *The Angels had a great care about the people of God in ancient times;* Examples are found every where in the Word of God; *Lot* was led out of *Sodom* by Angels, *Daniel* taught by an Angel, *Cornelius* answered by an Angel; an Angel withstood *Balaam* in the way, *Numb.* 22. An Angel walked with the three children in the fiery Furnace, *Dan.* 3. 25. An Angel shutteth up the mouths of Lions, that they might not hurt *Daniel* in the Den, *Dan.* 6. 22. An Angel comforted *Paul* in the Tempest, *Acts* 27. 23, 24. Scarce any remarkable thing befell the people of God, but it was accomplish'd by their ministry.

2. *The Ministry of Angels, though not so visible and sensible as heretofore, is not wholly ceased;* The priviledge of it belongeth to all Saints, *Heb.* 1. 14. *Are they not ministering spirits sent forth for the Heirs of salvation?* all that are called to inherit a blessing were under their tutelage; so see *Psal.* 91. 12. and those instances alledged in the former Proposition, are patterns and presidents by which we may know what to expect; the tutelage then was more visible and sensible, because the Church newly planted, needed to be confirmed; but God would have us live by faith, and expect all our supports in a more spiritual way; though we have not visible apparitions, yet we have real experiments of their succour; the evil Angels appear not, yet we doubt not of the hurt done by them; in the first times of the Gospel *Christ's* bodily presence was necessary, but now only his spiritual.

3. *The proper object of their Ministry and care are the children of God; wicked men are not under their covert and protection; 'tis true, they may be under a general care; as Hagar and Ishmael, who are set out in Scripture as Types of those that were rejected by the Lord; yet Gen. 21. 17. An Angel of the Lord came and stood by Hagar, and said, the Lord hath heard the cry of the lad: though possibly this might be, as he was Abrahams Son; dogs in the House have the Crumbs.*

4. *The Ministry of the Angels is over all the children of God, without exception; not only Moses, but the meanest Saint, is under their care; Gods love to his people is not dispenced with respect to their peculiar pomp and greatness, Mat. 18. 10. Offend not these little ones, for their Angels behold my Fathers face; 'tis chiefly meant of those that are little in esteem and account in the world; the message of Christs birth was brought by Angels to Shepherds, feeding their flocks in the fields, Luke 3.*

5. *As no Saints are excepted from receiving the benefit of their Ministry, so no Angels are excepted from being employed in it: Michael contendeth with Satan, and the Apostle saith, ἐχὶ μαρτύρις. Are they not all, &c. Heb. 1. 24. The Arch Angels themselves are ministring spirits; 'tis a rash boldness in the Schoolmen to exempt any from this Office; what an instance is here of Gods love, that the highest Angel should not be exempted from a care of the lowest Saints!*

6. *That every single believer hath his proper and allotted Angel to attend him from his birth to his death, is rather matter of problem and dispute, then positive assertion; there are some Scriptures make it probable, but not certain; sometimes we read of one Angel attending many men; and at other times of many Angels attending one man, as Jacob had many, Gen. 32. 1, 2. Gods Host, &c. to Elisha, 2 Kings 6. 17. Elisha prayed, and the Mountains were full of Chariots and Horses of fire, that is, of Angels coming to offer help in that case: 'Tis true, the opinion of a particular Angel Guardian was ancient; Plato saith, ἕκαστον αὖ ἔλατο δαίμονα τέτοτον φύλα συμπίμπαιξιν τῷ βίῳ καὶ ἀποπληρῇ τῆς αὐτοῦ αἰσθητικῆς; and among the ancient Fathers places of Scripture are brought for it, that are full of probability, not cogency; one is that of the old Testament, Gen. 48. 16. The Angel which*

redeemed me from all evil, bless the Lads, &c. in which passage he seemeth to ascribe his preservation and deliverance to some particular Angel; but to this may be replied what was before alledged of the Host of God, going along with him; and by this Angel is meant the Lord Christ, who is alone the object of worship and adoration; and who because of the frequency of his personal appearance and mediation between God and man, is set forth under the term of an Angel: The *Rabbins* expound it of the Angel of Gods presence: Another place is, *Mat. 18. 10.* *Their Angels see my Fathers face; not the Angels,* but their Angels; but the word *their* may only imply their common interest in the whole Host of God; Christ doth not say that every one of them hath an Angel: as for instance, it may be said, these Prisoners have their Keepers; these Scholars have their Masters; these Souldiers have their Captains; it doth not follow, that every one hath a particular Keeper, Master, Captain, &c. Another place is, *Acts 12. 15.* When the Maid said Peter was at the door, they distrusting her report, said, 'tis his Angel; This place may be answered thus, That sayings of men in Scripture are not all Scripture, or a part of our rule; and that many things were spoken by the Disciples in their rudeness, which are not altogether justifiable; but because this place is the main, let me examine it a little: Three opinions there are about the place: Some understand it * Appellatively; 'tis his Angel, or Messenger, sent by him out of prison. But Rhoda heard Peters voice, and that was the ground of the saying: Others understand it of some Angel come to give notice of his death, but that is groundless: Lastly, some, as Chrysostom, of a particular tutelar Angel; but whence doth it appear that these Angels had the shape and habit of those they kept? and Angels do not use to knock at doors, and wait for opening: and if Peter had a special Angel, it followeth not that all have; the meaning probably is, 'Tis a spirit that hath assumed his shape.

7. Though it be not certain that every particular believer hath an Angel deputed to his attendance, yet in the general, there is an assurance of a Guardianship, and Tutelage from the Angels; the Heirs of salvation have them among them; if the whole City hath a sufficient Guard, 'tis as good as if every Citizen had a distinct Souldier to defend him; nay, 'tis more for our com-

* *Johns* Disci-
ples are called
ἄγγελοι,
Angels, or
Messengers of
John, Luke 7.
24.

fort, that we have many rather then one ; we have to do with many enemies, and therefore we need much assistance: *Psal. 91. 12. He shall give his Angels charge over thee : Many Angels are charged with our safety, and though they be not so particularly conversant about us (as the other opinion conceiveth) yet they behold the face of God, and are always in his presence, and wait for his command, Psal. 103. 20. who so careth for every one as if he had none to care for him besides him.*

8. *This Tutelage is from their first conception in the womb, till the translation of body and soul into glory ; survey all the passages of life from the Womb to the Grave ; nay, after death, till the Resurrection, the Ministry of Angels doth not wholly cease : their care beginneth as soon as the child is quickned in the womb, for then they have another distinct charge to look after ; and as they are servants of providence, by their help they are born & brought into the world ; Gods providence taketh date thence, Gal. 1. 15. And they, I say, are instruments of providence ; they watch over us in infancy and childhood ; little ones are committed to their custody, and Babes and Sucklings have their Ange's, Mat. 18. Jesus Christ was provided for in his Cradle by an Angel, Mar. 2. 13. The Devil rampeth about the Elect whilst they are yet in their swaddling cloths ; That expression, Rev. 12. of the Dragons seeking to devour the man-child as soon as he was born, is figurative, but it alludeth to what is true : Again, as we grow up they rejoice at our conversion, Luke 15. We read of joy in Heaven over a sinner that repenteth ; you cannot gratifie the Angels more then in your conversion to God ; the Devil seeks to hinder it as much as he can, but they rejoice when a brand is pluckt out of the burning, Zech. 3. Again, after conversion ; they watch over us in duty and danger, and temptations ; in duties, where Satan is most buisie to hinder, Zech. 3. 1. they are most helpful ; the Angels are in the Assemblies of the faithful, 1 Cor. 11. 10. So in dangers, when Peter was in prison, God sendeth him an Angel to bring him out, Acts 12. *Rassinus* speaketh of a young man, a Martyr, on the Rack, that had his face wiped by an Angel, and refreshed by him in the midst of his pains : nay, in casual dangers, which we cannot foresee and prevent, *Psa. 91. 12. He shall give his Angels charge over thee, that thou dash not thy foot against a stone ;* *io in Temptations, Mat. 4. 11. they ministered to Christ when he**

was tempted by the devil; they came to shew how God will deal with his people in like cases: Once more, they are with us to comfort us in death; in the midst of his Agonies the Lord Jesus was comforted and refreshed by an Angel, *Lu* 22. 43. so they are with the faithful, helping and easing them in their sicknesses: After death they carry our souls to Heaven, as *Lazarus* was carried into *Abrahams bosom*, *Luke* 16. 22. Though the body had not the honour of a pompous burial, yet the soul is solemnly conveyed by Angels, and gathered up into the Communion of the souls of just men made perfect; as Christ himself also ascended into Heaven in the company of Angels, *Acts* 1. Once more, after death they guard our bodies in the Grave, as the Angels guarded Christs Sepulchre, *Matthew* 28. 2, 3, 4. God did set his Guards, as well as the High-Priests: Their last Ministry and service about the faithful, is to gather up their Bodies at the last day, *They shall gather up the Elect from the four Winds*, *Math.* 24. 31. and then their Office and Charge ceaseth.

9. *This Tutelage is ever administred according to Gods pleasure*, *Psalms* 103. 21. *Ye Ministers of his that do his pleasure, not their own, not ours, but his pleasure*; the help of Angels is more powerful, but no more absolute then the help of other means; for it dependeth still on the Will of God, as all other means of defence and outward support do; their employment is to attend us, and serve us, according to the Lords direction.

Let us now apply what hath been spoken.

First, it serveth for *Information*, to shew us,

1. The care of God for the Elect; He ingathereth his own power for our preservation, as also the *Mediation of Christ*, the *conduct of the Spirit*, and the *Ministry of Angels*. In *Zech.* 1. you have a Scheme of Providence, the man that stood among the *Mistle Trees*, sent the Angels to and fro, throughout the earth, and then they come and give him an account of what passeth in the world; The Man is Jesus Christ, who to pre-figure his Incarnation, is thus represented; and he hath all the Angels at his command, to send them forth as the condition of his Church requireth; and they, as his Intelligencers and Agents, are to bring him notice how all affairs and matters pass in the world;

Thus

Use 1.

Thus doth the Lord set forth himself to our capacity, and that we who are used to means may the better believe in *him*.

2. The *Condescension*, and *humility of the Angels*; they rejoyce in names of *service*, more then in *names of honour*, and will perform Offices of respect to the meanest Creatures: an Angel clothed with light and glory would come to the Shepherds, and do not refuse at Christs direction to wait upon those who are despised and rejected of men.

3. It informeth us of their *man-kindness*, which shameth our *envy*; their love is great to mankind, and they are affectionately desirous of our good, and therefore decline no Office of love and service to us; they rejoyced when the world was created as a dwelling place for man, *Job 38. 7*. And again at the coming of Christ, which was mans restoring, *Luke 2. 13*. And so at the calling and conversion of a sinner, *Luke 15. 7*. when we come to be possessed of our priviledges in Christ.

4. It informeth us of the dignity of the Saints; what a price doth the Lord, and the holy Angels, set upon the meanest Christian, *Gods own Court is their Guard*: certainly a godly man! though of the meanest calling, should not be contemptible; there is somewhat in Holiness more then the world seeth, some worth in it, or else God would not set such a Guard upon it, a Guard so full of *state* and *strength*; 'twas a mighty favour for *Mordecai* to have a *Courtier* of a great King to wait upon him for one hour: We have *Angels* that still attend and wait for our good.

5. It informeth us of the *obedience of the Angels in the lowest services*; God saith, go, and they go, though it be to wait upon poor and mean Creatures; we usually dispute commands when we should practice them, and stick at duties that have any thing of *abasement* and *self-denial* in them; in the Lords Prayer we are brought to this pattern, *Matth. 6. Thy will be done in Earth as it is in Heaven*, that is, by the holy Angels; it should be done by us with like *readiness* and *submission*: No Office or employment that God calleth us to should be looked upon as too mean and base for us; the Angels that excel in strength, when God commandeth, being willing to condescend to the Guardianship of men.

Use 2.

Secondly, It serveth for Exhortation to the Children of God.

1. To

1. To wait for the Angels help ; Do you keep in Gods wayes, and in your Callings, and you shall have safety and defence, when the Lord sees it fit for you ; remember you are a spectacle to God, Men and Angels, in all your actions, trials and sufferings, and bear up with a Confidence, becoming Christians, though you can do little as to the promotion of Christs interest ; What cannot God do by his Angels ?

2. To behave our selves as those that do expect this help, not tempting God, nor grieving the Angels ; We should take heed how we carry our selves in regard of this honourable attendance ; our sins and vanity offendeth them, as it doth God : Lot was a man of a mixt nature, yet vexed with the impure conversation of the Sodomites, 1 Pet. 2. 8. Angels are pure and holy Creatures, that still abide in the truth ; pride, lust, and vanity, is very offensive to them, especially impurities and undecencies in Gods worship, about which they have a special attendance ; therefore the Apostle biddeth the women to cover their heads, because of the Angels, 1 Cor. 11. 10. their fashion being to come into the Congregation with loose dishevelled locks, he mindeth them of the presence of the Angels : We may use a like argument to women to cover their naked Breasts, now their immodesty is grown so impudent, as to out-face the Ordinances of God.

3. To observe this when 'tis bestowed upon us ; The Angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him ; and then, Ob come, taste and see ; Psalm 34. 7, 8. When deliverances are strange and wonderful, and there is the least concurrence of visible causes to defend Christs interest, remember that all things visible and invisible were created by Christ, and for Christ, even Thrones, Principalities and Powers, Col. 1. 16.

Thirdly, Here is Reproof to wicked men that perform the Devils Ministry, at the part of the bad Angels, rather than the good ; despise, slander, oppose, seduce, and tempt the Children of God : how darest thou despise those whom the Angels honour ? you think them unworthy of your countenance and company, when Angels disdain not to vouchsafe them their service & attendance ; you slander those whom they defend, and oppose and persecute them whom they are engaged to protect ; and wrong them whose Angels behold the Face of God ; and tempt and seduce them whom they rejoyce to see brought home to God.

I have

I have but one word more, and I have done with this Point: Get *this interest* if you would be under this *Tutelage*; get an interest in Christ, and then you get an interest in the Angels; *their Angels*, &c. *Mat.* 18. 10. they are not called *Gods*, but *theirs*; hereafter the Saints shall be *ἰσάγγελοι* like the Angels in Heaven, *Luke* 20. 30. and here, till we have *this glory*, we shall have *their defence*.

Observat. 4. In the next place, somewhat may be observed from the *style* and Character of this Angel, *Michael the Arch Angel*; That there is an order among the Angels, both good and bad; they have their distinct heads; we read of *Michael*, and we read of *Beelzebub*; there is an order in Hell, thence that expression, *Mat.* 25. 41. *The Devil and his Angels*; which seemeth to intimate a Prince among the *unclean spirits*; much more is there an order among the good Angels. God that made all things in order, would not endure confusion among those heavenly Creatures; for that would seem to infringe their happiness: but now to define this Order, and the several degrees of it, were but to intrude our selves into things we have not seen, *Col.* 2. 19. * *Cyriel* calleth it *τὴν ἑστὴν τοῦ ἀρχαγγέλου κρείττονα*, the domineering of bold spirits: The School-men take upon them as if they knew all the particulars of their government and distinction; but in things not revealed there can be no certainty; the Apostle indeed speaketh of several ranks of invisible Creatures, *Col.* 1. 16. *Thrones, Dominions, Principalities, and Powers*; but who can particularly define their Office and Order? a distinction there is, but what it is we know not: however, the general consideration is useful. Partly, to shew us the necessity of order and subordination; no Creatures can subsist without it; they that are against Magistracy, are against peace and happiness; the Angels and Devils are not without their Heads and Princes. Partly, to represent to us the Majesty of God; He hath Angels, and Arch-Angels, Thrones, Dominions, Principalities and Powers; our eyes are dazzled at the magnificence and lustre of earthly Kings, when we see them surrounded with Dukes, Marquesses, and Earls, and Barons: Oh what poor things are these to those Orders and Degrees of Angels, with which God is invironed! Partly, to acquaint us with the happiness of the everlasting estate: 'Tis the misery of the wicked, that they shall be cast out with the

Devil

* See Rivets
Cathol. Ordo-
dox. de Ang.
Grad.

Devil and his Angels; and our happiness that we shall make up one Church and Assembly, with *Angels*, and *Arch-Angels*, Heb. 12.

Somewhat may be observed from the matter of the contention, *the body of Moses*, which the Devil would abuse to Idolatry, that is the reason why he was so earnest in the contest: Note, *That the Devil loveth Idolatry*; all false worships, either directly, or by consequence, tend to the honour of the Devil; therefore Idol-Feasts are called the *Table of Devils*, 1 Cor. 10: 31. Now 'tis observable, that those Sacrifices which were offered to the true God, but in an unbecoming manner, are called the *Sacrifices of Devils*, Levit. 17. 7. compare it with vers. 3, 4. Though they killed a Goat, or an Ox, or a Lamb, to the Lord for a Sacrifice, because 'twas in the Camp, and not before the Tabernacle; God saith, *they shall no more offer Sacrifice to Devils*: so 'tis said of Gods own people, Deut. 32. 17. *They sacrifice to Devils, and not unto God*; in their intension it was unto God, but in the issue, and necessary interpretation of it, 'twas to the Devil: Now the Devil delights in Idols and false worships: Partly, in malice to God: the Lord above all things is most tender of his worship, and therefore Satan is most butie to corrupt it: There are two things that are dear to God; his *Truth*, and his *Worship*; now Satan bendeth his strength and spight, to corrupt his *Truth* with *error*, and his *Worship* with *superstition*. Partly, in malice and spight to men; God is a jealous God; Satan knoweth that corruptions of worship do not go unrevengeed, Psal. 16. 4. *Sorrows shall be multiplied on them that hasten after another God*; of all sinners they shall not escape; the severest revenges of God have been occasioned by prevarications in worship, as Lev. 10. 3. on *Aarons* sons; strange fire in the Censers brought down strange fire from Heaven; so 1 Sam. 6. 20. there were 50000 *Benjamenites* slain for an undue Circumstance: so the breach made upon *Uzzah*, 2 Sam. 6. 6, 7. the Devil is not ignorant of this; and therefore longing for mans destruction, seeketh to hasten it as much as he can by Idolatry, and false worship. Partly, out of pride; he is constant in evil, and abode in pride, though he abode not in the truth; he would fain be worshipped, and assumed into a fellowship of the Divine Honour and glory; he saith to Christ, Mat. 4. 9. *Fall down and worship me*;

me, and I will give thee all these things; the Devil is no Changling; though he doth not retain his place, he retaineth his pride; nothing so pleasing to him as Worship and Adoration; and so he can get it any way from the creatures, he is contented.

Well then, it sheweth us,

Use. 1.

1. What care we should take to be *right in worship*, both for the *object* and *manner*: 'tis Idolatry not only to worship *false Gods* in the place of the true God, but to worship the true God in a *false manner*, and both sorts do gratifie the Devil; when he cannot hold the people under utter blindness and Paganism, he is glad if he can draw them to *undue Rites* and *Ceremonies* in worship; therefore let us hate the least kind of Idolatry, if we would not prog for the Devils Kingdom: *David* saith, Psal. 16. 4. *I will not take their name into my lips*, that he would abhor the very mention of Idols: so *Hosea* 2. 16. God would no more be called *Baal*, though it signified *Lord* and *Huband*, because the Title had been applyed to Idols: The Israelites when they took Cities, they changed their names if they had any tincture of Idolatry, *Num.* 32. 38. *Nebo* and *Baalmeon*, their names being changed; so exact should we be in keeping from Idols.

2. Let us beware of Idolatry; Satan loveth it, and that is motive enough; we should hate as *Christ* hateth, and love as *he* loveth, *Rev.* 2. 6. and on the contrary, love what *Satan* hateth, and hate what *he* loveth; naturally we are wondrous prone to this sin, and therefore Idolatry is reckoned as a *work of the flesh*, *Gal.* 5. 20. man naturally hath a corrupt and working fancy and imagination, which depending upon sense, formeth fleshly conceptions, and notions of God; and therefore are we so prone to erre in this worship: 'tis not needful (I hope) to speak to you of *Paganish* and *Popish* Idolatry: Let me only now disswade you,

First, from making the true God an Idol in your thoughts, by forming apprehensions unworthy of the glory of his Essence, *Psal.* 50. 21. *Thou thoughtest that I was altogether like thy self*; Now thus we do, when we conceive him of such a mercy as to hold fellowship with one that continueth under the full power of his sins, so weak as not to be able to help in deep extremities, *Zech.* 8. 6. Of so rigorous and revengeful disposition, as not to pardon injuries and offences, upon submission and repentance, *Hos.* 11. 8. of a fickle nature; so as to

fail

fall in his promises, *Numb. 23. 19.* Thus 'tis easie to turn the true God into an Idol of our own brains. To remedy this, consider God in his works, and in Christ. In his works: *Cyril*, I remember, observeth, that before the Flood we read of no Idolatry. *Aquinas* addeth a reason to the observation, because the memory of the Creation was then fresh in their thoughts: Again, look upon God in Christ; you heard before, in *Levit. 17.* If they did not bring their sacrifice to the Tabernacle, it was called a Sacrifice of Devils; The Tabernacle was a Type of Christ; you make God an Idol, when you worship him out of Christ, *For the Father will be honoured in the Son, John 5.* Therefore when ever you go to God, take Christ along with you.

Secondly, From setting up any Idol against God in your affections; when you set up any thing above God in your esteem, especially in your trust, that's an Idol; covetousness is twice called Idolatry, *Col. 3 5. Eph. 5. 5.* because it doth withdraw our affections from God; yea our care, our esteem, our trust, which is the chiefest homage and respect which God expecteth from the Creature: I mention these things, because I would speak somewhat to practice, and because Satan is gratified with spiritual Idolatry, as we I as with that which is gross and bodily.

From that Clause [*about the body of Moses*] once more observe, That of all kind of Idolatry, the Devil abuseth the world most with Idolatrous respects to the bodies and Relicks of dead Saints. If you ask why, I answer. Partly, because this kind of Idolatry is most likely to take, as being most plausible and suitable to that Reverend esteem which we have of those that are departed in the Lord; and so our Religious Affections become a snare to us: Partly, because when men become Objects of Worship and Adoration, the God-Head is made more contemptible, and mens Conceits of a Divine Power run at a lower rate every day. Partly, because this malicious fiend hopeth this way to beat the Lord with his own weapon; when the bodies and Relicks of those Saints, who by the Famosness of their Examples were like to draw many to God, doe 'as much, or more, withdraw men from him; and Superstition doth as much hurt, as their example did good. Partly, because the Devil by long experience hath found this to be a successful way in the World; *Lactantius* proveth it, that the Idolizing of

famous men, was the rise of all Idolatry; and *Tertullian*, in the end of his Apology, observeth the same, that Heathen Idolatry came in this way; *sub nominibus & imaginibus mortuorum*, by a reverence to the images of dead men, whose memory was precious amongst them: *Ninus* or *Nimrod*, the first Idolater, set up his own dead Father *Belus*; whence came the names of *Baal*, and *Bel*, for an Idol: The *Teraphim*, stoln by *Rachel*, Gen. 31. 35. were the Images of their Ancestors, whom *Laban* worshipped; so, in the primitive times, before any other Idolatry was brought into the Church, they began with the *Tombs* and *Shrines of the Martyrs*.

2/3 12

First, It sheweth us the first rise of Idolatry; respect to the Relicks and Remains of some men, famous in their generations: Satan attempted it betimes, not only among the Heathens, but among the people of God; the contended for the *body of Moses*, that he might set it up for this use; but that which he could not obtain then, he hath effected now in the Roman Synagogue, by the *Arms*, the *Legs*, the *Hands*, the *Feet*, the *Pictures* of the Martyrs: surely such a known Artifice, and ancient method of deceit, (a man would think) should long ere this have been discerned, but that God hath given them up to *believe a lye*: Well might the Anti-Christian State be called, *Rev. 18. 8. Babylon, Sodom, and Egypt*; that is, *Babylon* for Idolatry, *Sodom* for filthiness, and *Egypt* for Ignorance and darkness; the same Idolatry being practised, which was in use in the darkest times of Paganism: *Heathenism* and *Poperie* differ but little, only the names are changed; a new Saint for an old Heathen Idol; their canonizing, and the Heathens *Archevots*, are much alike; so are their Saints, and the Heathens *Heroes*, and *middle powers*: only that the Papists have put many in the *Kalendar*, which either never were in the world, or else were wicked and traiterous; as our *Becket*, and *George* an *Arrian Bishop*, that so the Devil might be doubly gratified, by the Shrine it self; and that by the canonization of the infamous person sin might become less odious.

Secondly, It sheweth the perverseness of men, who are apt superstitiously to regard the Relicks of them dead, whom they despised living: *Moses* was often opposed living, and after death likely to be adored; as 'tis often the condition of Gods people,

people, to live hated, and dye Sainted. *Vetus morbus est* (saith *Salvian*) *quo mortui sancti coluntur, vivi contemnuntur*: The Scribes and Pharisees garnished the Tombs of the dead Prophets, and killed the living, *Mat.* 23. 29. 30. And the Jews, in the fifth of *John*, pretended love to *Moses*, and shewed hatred to *Christ*; posterity honoureth them whom former ages destroyed: living Saints are an eye-sore, they torment the world, either by their example, or their reproofs, *Rev.* 11. 10. *Heb.* 11. 7. but objects out of sight do not exasperate, and stand in the way of our lusts; this fond affection is little worth, those that were ready to adore *Moses* would not imitate him.

Again, From that [*He durst not*] *ἐκ τῆς αἰσχύνης*, he had not the boldness to do any thing contrary to the Law of God, or unbecoming his Rank and Ministry: Note, *That sin is a bold contest, or a daring of God*: Every sin is an affront to the Law that forbideth it, *2 Sam.* 12. 9. *Wherefore hast thou sinned in despising the Commandment?* a sinner doth in effect say, *What care I for the Commandment?* I will go on for all that; but a godly man feareth the Commandment, *Prov.* 13. 13. If a Law of God standeth in his way, he durst not go forward; he feareth more to break a Law, then to meet with the Devil in all his ruff, or any opposition from the world; this is a holy timorousness: whereas on the contrary, no such boldness as in sinning: 'tis not only a despising of the Law, but a contest with God himself, *1 Cor.* 10. 22. *Do we provoke the Lord to jealousy, are we stronger then he?* will you enter into the lists with God? as if you could make your part good against him? *Ezek.* 22. 14. He that sins against light and conscience, he biddeth open defiance to the Majesty of God; and his lust and Gods will do contend for mastery: Let this make us afraid of sin; 'tis a daring attempt of the Creature against his Maker; a challenging of God to the Combate; well might the Apostle say, that the carnal mind is *ἐχθρὰ*, *enmity against God*, *Rom.* 8. 7. Therefore when you are tempted, consider, What am I now a doing? Sha'l I challenge the Combate of my Maker? Draw Omnipotency about my ears? An Angel durst not: *How can I do this wickedness, and sin against God?* *Gen.* 39. 9.

Again, It informeth us what is the proper remedy against sin; an holy awe and fear; therefore the first and chiefest point of true wisdom is made to be the fear of God, *Proverbs* 9. 10.

so *Proverbs* 14. 21. this keepeth the soul from daring. *Jobs* eschewing evil is ascribed to his fearing God, *Job* 1. 1. There are two Grounds of this fear, *Gods Power*, and *Gods Goodness*.

1. *Gods Power*; Shall we contend with Him who can command Legions? surely he will always overcome when he judgeth, *Rom.* 3. 4. and have the best of it at last; and so this sin will be my ruine: there is a difference between striving with him in a sinful, and wrestling with him in a gracious way; there God will be overcome by his own strength, *Command ye me, &c.* *Isa.* 45. 11. but when you have the confidence to contest with him in a sinful way, what will become of you? *Psalms* 76. 7. *Thou, even thou art to be feared, in who can stand, in thy wrath, when thou art angry?* Man may make his part good against man, but who can cope with the Lord himself?

2. *Gods Love and Mercy*, That should beget a fear, or an unwillingness to displease God; *Hosea* 3. 5. *They shall fear the Lord and his goodness*; not only abstain from sin (as a Dogg from the bait, for fear of a Cudgel) out of bondage, or servile fear, but out of an holy childlike affection to God, and so do not only forbear sin, but abhor it; 'tis base and servile, when we are moved with no other respects but our own danger; there is an holy fear, which ariseth from grace, and partly of nature: an Arch-Angel durst not; that is, the holiness of his Nature would not permit him; there is an holy reverend fear, by which we fear to offend our good God, as the greatest evil in the world; and it ariseth, partly, from the new Nature; and partly, from thankfulness to God, because of his Mercy in Jesus Christ.

I have done with this Note, when I have told you, That boldness in sinning resembleth the Devil; but an holy fear resembleth Michael; 'tis Devil-like to adventure upon sin, without fear and shame: Satan had the impudency to seek to defeat the Lords purpose of burying the body of Moses; but the good Angel in opposing him, durst not bring a railing accusation. Certainly, *They that fear neither God, nor man, Luke* 18. 7. have out-grown the heart of a man, and are next to the Devils; many account it a praise to themselves when they are bold to engage in villainous actions and attempts; Oh to be presumptuous
and

and self-willed, is the worst Character that can be given to a man; a stubborn boldness argueth a seared Conscience.

Once more, from that [*ὁ ἄνθρωπος* He durst not] That the Angels are of a most holy Nature, which will not permit them to sin: Therefore they are called Holy Angels, *Matth. 25. 31.* and the Devils *unclean spirits*: In their Apparitions they usually came in a garb that represented their innocency; as at Christs Sepulchre there were two Angels in white, the one at the head, the other at the feet, where Jesus had lain, *Mat. 28. 4. 50* to Daniel, *Dan. 10. 5.* one appeared, having his loins girt with fine Gold of Uphaz, with long white Robes; Gold, to shew his Majesty; in white Robes, as an Emblem of purity and holiness: see *Acts 10. 2.* Now this Holiness they have, partly, by the gift of God in their Creation; God made them so at the first, which may beget an hope in us men; the same God must sanctifie us, that made the holy Angels: surely he can wash us though never so filthy, and make us whiter then snow, *Psal. 51. 7.* Partly, by the merit of Christ, which reacheth to things in Heaven, as well as in Earth, *Col. 1. 20. Ephes. 1. 10.* If those places be not cogent, but be thought to intend the glorified Saints; yet because they are called Elect Angels, *1 Tim. 5. 21.* and all election is carried on, in and by Christ, *Ephes. 1. 4.* It seemeth probable at least, that they have benefit by him; yea, *Heb. 12. 22, 23.* they are made a part of that general assembly of which Christ is the Head; and so, by consequence, they are members of the redeemed society, which should encourage us the more to come to Christ. Angels have much of their whiteness from being washed in Christs blood; they are preserved in Jesus Christ, as well as we, and have their Confirmation from him, or else they had fallen with the other Apostate Spirits.

Use 1.

Again, This Holyness is the more increased and augmented:

1. By their constant Communion with God; for their alwayes beholding his Face must needs beget the more Holy awe and reverence: *Michael durst not*, &c. 'Tis a great advantage to Holiness, to set God before our eyes, and to foresee him in all our wayes, *Psalms 18. 23. I was upright before thee*; that is, the thought of his being before God made him more sincere; *He that doth evil hath not seen God*, in the third Epistle of John.

John verse 11. that is, hath no acquaintance with him; the good Angels being so near the chiefest good, are at the greater distance from evil.

1. By their continual obedience; *They do his Commandments, hearkning to the voice of his Word, Psalm 103. 20. exercise perfecteth and strengtheneth every habit; the Angels the more they do the Will of God, the more they hate what is contrary to his Will; the evil Angels grow worse by frequent acts of spight and malice and the good Angels better by frequent acts of Duty: For the first, see, 1 John 3. 8. The Devil sinneth from the beginning, Satan is still a sinning, and his whole life a continued act of Apostacy: so, the good Angels are alwayes doing, they rest not day and night, Revel. 4. 8. Surely 'twill be a matter of great advantage to exercise our selves unto godliness; the greater will be our hatred of sin, and delight in obedience: as on the other side, the exercising of the heart unto sin doth much strengthen and increase it, 2 Pet. 2. 14. In Heaven where there is continual duty, there is no sin.*

Ler us apply it now.

Use 1.

First, It serveth to humble us; we are the next rank of reasonable Creatures, but how doe we differ from them? their Natures engage them to holiness, and ours being corrupted ingage us to sin; their nature will not permit them to sin, and our nature will not permit us to do that which is good, *Rom. 7. 21. and yet the Angels are ashamed of this their nature; they cover their faces, when they behold Gods, Job 15. 14, 15. What is man that he should be clean? and he that is born of a wo man, that he should be righteous? Behold, he putteth no trust in his Saints; yea, the Heavens are not clean in his sight. These Holy Angels, when they compare themselves with God, are abashed; and should not we much more? See also Job 4. 19.*

Secondly, It serveth to stir us up to holiness: You will say, where lieth the Motive?

I Answer,

1. *We are bound as well as they; they behold his face, and we behold his face in a glass; we are under a Law as well as they, yea, commanded to observe their pattern, Marth. 6. 10. Thy will be done on Earth as it is in Heaven. The examples of the Saints on earth, are no fit Copy for us to write after, for there*

we

we shall find many of the Letters set awry ; in their lives, corruption is more visible than grace ; therefore Christ giveth us a Copy from Heaven, that we might aim at the holiness and perfection of the Angels : 'tis but equal that we who expect to be like the Angels in glory, Luke 20. 36. ὡς ἄγγελοι, should be like them in grace now : many would strive to be as Angels for gifts and parts, but not for holiness ; for exact purity and cheerfulness, and readiness in service, which yet are the things propounded to our imitation ; the Devil retaineth cunning since his Apostacy ; to be wise to do evil, is to be like the bad Angels, not the good ; if you would not be cast out with them hereafter, you should not take their Copy and example for imitation, but that of the holy Angels.

2. *We are bound more than they as being of an inferior rank ; and acts of submission and obedience do chiefly oblige inferiours, the Angels themselves are inferior to God ; but dwellers in houses of clay, much more ; that passage of the Psalmist is emphatical, 153. 20. The Angels that excel in strength do his Commandments : shall the Peasant scorn that work in which the Prince himself is engaged ? If the glorious mighty Angels durst not sin against God, we should not much more : When John would have worshipped the Angel, he saith, Rev. 22. 9. See thou do it not, for I am thy fellow servant. Ah, who would decline the work, when an Angel is our fellow-servant ? when these mighty spirits put their necks to the work of the Lord, shall sorry man be excused ?*

3. *We are the more bound for their sakes, because of their Tutelage, they are present with us : we are awed by a man of gravity, much more should we be by the presence of an Angel : When Cato was upon the Stage, they durst not call for their ob-scene Sports ; there is an Angel alwayes by you ; What reports (think you) will they carry to Christ, if they should see any thing that is unseemly ? 1 Timi. 5. 21. I charge you before God, and our Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect Angels, &c. The holy Angels are as it were the Spies and Intelligencers of Heaven, and do acquaint Christ not only with our miseries, but our sins : Gods omnipresency is a great depth, we cannot fathom it with our thoughts, and therefore it worketh but little with us ; the nearer things come to the manner of our presence, the more do they*

affect us: consider the Angels are present with you in the room where (it may be) you are acting your privy wickedness.

Again, we had need be holy, the rather for the Angels sake, because else we shall lose their Tutelage; they care not to take notice of an impure, obstinate sinner, *Psalm 34. 7. The Angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him*: they that fear God themselves, delight most in them that do likewise: suitableness of spirit and life, breedeth an holy and sweet familiarity between us; they delight to keep us, and go with us, here, that they may lay a Foundation for a more familiar acquaintance in Heaven: Now shall we grieve such blessed companions! when *Balaam* went to curse the people of God, a good angel resists him, *Num. 22. 22.* If an Angel stood in the way of a Sorcerer, much more do they seek to stop and prevent, the miscarriages and offences of Gods children; will you break forth or go on violently, when an Angel standeth in the way? and leave their Tutelage for a lust? they are holy, and disallow all carnal enterprises, and would withstand the execution of them: will you constrain them to forsake you? You know how it sped with *Josiah*, when he would not turn his face, but goe out without the defence of God and his Angels, see *2 Chronicles, 35. 22.* He was wounded in the battle, and goeth home and dieth.

Thirdly, it teacheth us to be more awful, all fear is not slavish: the Angels that have a pure nature, are afraid to sin, we have a mixed nature: corruption is already gotten into our souls, and therefore we have more need of caution: as they that have an enemy without, and a treacherous party within, have need to watch and ward; fear is all the remedy left us: we cannot stop the flux of natural corruption; but we may withstand an actual temptation; as the Angels resist the admission of sin; so let us withstand the increase and propagation of it; we are alwayes in the presence of God, and shall we affront him to his face? fear keepeth the Angels pure, and us holy; them from the admission of sin, and us from the commission of it: so *Solomon* saith, *Blessed is he that feareth alwayes, Prov. 28. 14.* that is, not that perplexeth himself with needless terrors and scruples, that were a torture, not a blessedness; that's the Devils fear, who believe and tremble. But when we are alwayes

waies cautious, out of a deep respect to God; that we dare not offend him at any time, this is a *blessed fear*, like the good Angels fear; as *Michael* here durst not bring a railing accusation.

The next Point is from that [a railing Accusation,] in the Original 'tis *καὶ οὕτως βλασφημία*, the judgment or sentence of *Blasphemy*, or evil speaking: The meaning is, such unworthy Language as would not become any serious judgment or process; and because the Angel was a party, not a Judge, we translate it not, a railing judgment, but a railing Accusation. Thence Observe, That to the worst Adversary, in the best cause, railing and reviling must not be used. *Michael* when contending with the Devil about the body of *Moses*, &c. The Reasons are,

1. Because such Reproaches come from an evil principle, contempt or passion; both of which argue pride; one that over-valued himself, disdaineth others, and stormeth when he is crossed, as a full stream roareth and swelleth when it meeteth with a dam and obstruction.

2. Such Reproaches are most unsuitable to matters of Religion; the God of peace will not be served with a wrathful spirit; and *Christs* warfare needeth no carnal weapons. Christianity of all Religions is the meekest and most humble; the Foundation of it is the Lamb slain; and the consignation, and sealing of it, is by the Spirit, who descended in the form of a Dove; both emblems of a modest humility: and should a meek Religion be defended by the violence and fury of our passions? Cursing doth ill become them that are called to inherit a blessing, 1 Pet. 3. 9.

3. They are flatly against the Word, the Scripture is a great friend to the peace of humane societies; for it condemneth the least offensive word and gesture, Isa. 58. 9. Thou shalt put away from thee the yoke; and the putting forth of the finger; a gesture of indignation, and therefore God would have it laid aside, even the putting forth of the finger, as well as the yoke broken: So see Mat. 5. 22. But I say unto you, whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause, is in danger of the judgment: And whosoever shall say unto his brother Racha, is in danger of the Council: and whosoever shall say thou fool, shall be in danger of Hell fire. The Scribes and Pharisees had restrained the fifth Commandment, to the gross act of murder; Christ telleth them, that rash anger, with all the expressions of it, is murder: His expressions

allude to the Courts of the Jews; three there were especially among them; *the lowest, the middle, and the highest*. Their *lowest* *Indicator* was of *three men*, who took cognizance of lighter matters; as injuries and strifes about goods and things of a pecuniary concernment: this Court was set up in *lesser Towns*, that had few inhabitants: The second Court was of *three and twenty men*, before whom the *weightiest causes* were brought; concerning the *life of a man*, all *Capital crimes*, or if an Ox had goared a man or woman; or in case of any abominable commixtion with a *Beast*, if a *woman approached to a Beast*, &c. *Levit. 20. 16*. This Court was set up in all the *Cities of Palestina*, and was called the *lesser Sanhedrim*; and because *Jerusalem* was the head City, the *Seat of the Prince*, and *Temple* was there; therefore in that City were two of these *lesser Sanhedrim*, the lower: sate in the *Gate of the Mountain*; that is, that Gate which gave entrance to the Mountain of the Temple; the other being the higher, sate in the *Gate of Ezra*, neer the Porch of the Temple. The *third Indicator* was the *greater Sanhedrim*, which consisted of *seventy men*, in imitation of the Council of God to *Moses*, *Numbers, 11. 16*. This was the highest Judicatory, from whence there was no appeal, as there might be from the lower Courts to this: into this Assembly were chosen such as did excell others for Nobility, and Wisedome; and that by a solemn laying on of hands; strangers or unclean persons, or Common people, might not come nigh unto them: To this Tribunal were referred all doubtful matters, too hard for inferior Courts to decide, *Deuteronomy, 8. 8. 9*. as also all things that did belong to the twelve Tribes, or to the whole Nation; all things that concerned the *High-Priest*, *matters of Warre, and Peace*, the *false Prophet*, &c. Therefore Christ saith, *Luke 13. 33*. *It cannot be that a Prophet should perish out of Jerusalem*, that being the City where the *Sanhedrim* sate, by this Court was Christ condemned, and the Apostles, *Acts, Chapter, 4. 5. and Steven. Chapter 6. 7. and Paul, Acts 23. 1*. They sate in a part of the Temple, called *Gastih*; their punishments were *strangling, beheading, stoning, burning*; those that were condemned to be burned, were burnt in the *Valley of Hinnom*; and in great cases besides his corporal death, the Malefactor was appointed and *accursed to the judgement of Hell*.

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Let me apply all to the present case : Christ doth not meddle with the lowest Court, *the judgment of three men*, because Capital matters did not belong to their cognizance ; and his intent is to shew what a Capital matter the least expression of anger is : *Whosoever is angry with his Brother without a cause* (saith he) *is in danger of judgment* ; that is, of the judgment of twenty three men, to shew that rash anger is before God a Capital matter. *And whosoever shall say to his brother, Racha, thou vain and witless fellow* ; this was the lowest kind of contumely, then in use ; some make it only an Interjection of indignation : [*is in danger of the Council*] : that is, of the Sanhedrim ; which noteth, That Anger expressed, though in the lowest way, is an higher fault then single and bare anger ; as the fault was greater for which they appeared before the higher Sanhedrim, then that for which they appeared before the twenty three Judges : [*But whosoever shall say, thou fool,*] This noteth a higher contempt, as implying a charge, not only of weakness of nature, but of sin and wickedness, [*he is in danger of Hell fire,*] which was the highest judgment of the Sanhedrim ; to burn them in the Valley of Hinnom, and to leave them accursed till the Lord come : and so proportionably it noteth the greatness of the crime, which is committed in standing and reproaching our brethren ; 'tis a most odious sin before God ; for in allusion to mans judgment, he sheweth, that though there be degrees in the sin, and will be in the punishment, yet the whole kind is very displeasing to the Lord.

4. Because Reproaches have an influence, and do exasperate rather then convince : The Dog that followeth the game with larking and bawling, loseth the prey ; and there is not a more likely way to undermine the truth, then an unteemly defence of it : Satan is mightily gratified (if men had eyes to see it) with the ill managing of Gods cause.

First it serveth for Information, to shew us the vanity of those excuses by which men would disguise their wrath and passion ; What will you plead, *I am in the right way*, 'tis Gods cause. *Answ.* Passion is blind, and cannot judge, James 1. 20. *The wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God* ; the wrong way may be usually descryed by the excesses and violences of those that are engaged in it : if we be in the right, extremities and

Use 1.

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furies of passion are not lawful, our religions may over-set us; when Religion which should limit us is made a party to engage them, 'tis hard to keep bounds; a stone the higher the place from whence it falleth, giveth the more dangerous blow; so the higher the matter about which we contend, usually our *Anger* falleth with the more violence, and is the more unmortified, because of the *pretence of zeal*: if the erring parties offend through ignorance; remember, *a bone out of joint* must be setled again with a gentle hand, *Gal. 6. 1*: Are they opposite, stubborn? in *weakness instruct those that oppose themselves*, *2 Tim. 2. 25*. when their *absurd opposing* is apt to tempt us to *rage, passion, and reproach*, we must contain our selves; the hasty Disciples knew not what spirit they were of.

Do they provoke, revile, *wrong us first*? *Ans.* The railing and ill dealing of another doth not dissolve the *bond of our duty to God*; to return injury for injury, is but to act over their sin; 'twas bad in them, and 'tis worse in us; for he that sinneth by example, sinneth doubly, as having had experience of the odiousness of it in another: *Qui malum imitatur, bonus esse non potest*; *revenge and injury* differ only in order of time; the one is *first*, the other *second* in the fault; and 'twas no excuse to *Adam*, that he was *not first in the transgression*: Christianity teacheth us a rare way of overcoming injuries; not only by *patience*, but *doing good* to those that wrong us, *Rom. 12. 17.* and *1 Pet. 3. 9.* *render not reviling for reviling*, but contrariwise *blessing*; we have for our pattern Christ, *who being reviled reviled not again*; *1 Pet. 2. 23.* and herein he was imitated by his Disciples, *1 Cor. 4. 13.* *βλασφημίας ὑπομεταλαμβάνομεν*, being *defamed we intreat*; a Motto which I would have prefixed to all rejoinders, or replies to a virulent opposition: *Calvins* modesty concerning *Luher*, is notable; *Etiamsi me diabolus vocarit, eum tamen insignem Dei servum agnoscam*, *Though he should call me Devil, yet God forbid but I should account him an eminent servant of Christ*. 'Twas once an Argument for the truth of our Religion, that the Scriptures contained a Doctrine that could not be of men; as *forbidding revenge*, which is so sweet to nature, and commanding us to do good to them that hate us.

But shall I suffer my self, and in me the *cause of Christ*, to be trampled upon?

Ans.

Ans. You are allowed a *modest vindication* of the truth, and your *own innocency*, Prov. 26. 4. 5. *Answer not a fool according to his folly, lest thou be like him.* Answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own conceit. You will say, here is hot and cold in one breath: I answer, Solomon speaketh of a *scolding, railing fool*; and the meaning is, do not imitate him in his foolish passion; this were to be evil, because he is so; and 'tis against reason, that because I am sensible of undecent carriage in him, therefore I should allow it in my self; but yet *answer him*, that is, to the purpose, and with solid reason beat down his *presumption and ignorance*, with a *weak*, but a *strong reply*; such as may *check his pride*, but not *imitate his folly*: 'Tis observable, when 'twas said to Christ, John 8. 48. 49. *Thou art a Samaritan, and hast a Devil*; he answered not a word to the *personal reproach*; but where his *Commission* was touched, to that he replieth, saying, *I have not a Devil, but I honour my Father*: 'tis but *weakness of mind*, or *strength of passion*, to regard *personal injuries*. In short, we may answer, but not with *harsh and contumelious language*.

Secondly, Here is a Direction to *publick persons*, and those that can *handle the Pen of the Writer*; Passion is apt to taint our Religious defences; but check it, *Michael durst not bring a railing accusation*; leave all unhandsoneness of prosecution to them that defend an evil cause; *The servant of God must be gentle and patient*, 2 Tim. 2. 24. *Opprobrious Language* doth but darken a just quarrel and contention: But you will say, may we not reprove the sins of men, and that somewhat sharply? I Answer, yea, 'tis lawful, as appeareth both by the practice of the *Prophets and Angels*, yea of Christ himself, and also by the precepts of the Word; *Paul saith, Titus 1. 7. That a Bishop must not be self-willed, and soon angry*; and yet he biddeth him *ἐλέγχειν ἀκολούτους*, to rebuke some gainsayers sharply; there is a great deal of difference between railing and a reproof: a *Sermon* without some warmth and keenness in it, is but like a *Cold oration*; men that speak from their brain will speak coldly, because they only declaim against things for fashion's sake, without any sense or touch upon their hearts; an *affectionate pleading* for Christ, is like *strong water*; whereas a *formal narration* is but like *River water*, without any strength and vigor: They that love Christ,

will

Use 2:

will be zealous for his Truths and Ordinances; and zeal cannot deliver it self without some smartness and earnestness; but a cold indifferency is more tame and flat: But then this must be done with great caution; you had need look to your spirits. Partly, because Satan loveth to corrupt a Religious affection: Partly, because in these businesses God is not only ingaged, but our selves; and many times the favour of the main River is lost, when 'tis mingled with other streams; too too often do we beg'in in the Spirit, and end in the flesh: The Cautions which I shall give, respect. 1. *The Object, or Cause.* 2. *The Persons.* 3. *Manner.* 4. *Principle.* 5. *End.*

1. *The Cause* must be regarded, that it be *real* and *weighty*; *weighty* it must be, 'tis preposterous to be all of a fire about questionable truths, and matters of a less regard; the *flaming Sword* was set about *Paradise*: And *real* it must be, the sin we reprove must be manifest, and the faults we charge, apparent, Mat. 5. 22. *If any be angry with his brother without a cause, &c.* otherwise Christ and his Apostles called *Racha*, Mat. 23. 17. *Q fools and blind*; and Luke 24. 15. *O fools and slow of heart to believe, &c.* and Gal. 3. 3. *O foolish Galathians*; and James 2. 20. *O vain man, &c.* but in all these cases, there was a *cause*; false and rash imputations are but *railing*; zeal being a *fiere* and *strong passion*, you must not let it flie upon the throat of any thing, but what is certainly evil.

2. *The persons* must be considered; *weak sinners* are to be distinguished from the *malicious*, and the *tractable* from the *obstinate*; Gods tender Lambs, though straying, must be gently reduced; put a difference, saith our Apostle, verse 19. *Ad evangelizandum non maledicendum missus es*, said *Oecolampadius* to *Farrel*, who was a good man, but a little too violent; Thou wert not sent to *revile*, but to *preach the Gospel*; but on the other side, there is a difference to be used in the case of *Hypocrites*, that gain but by that repute and esteem which they have; Christ himself inveighed against the Pharisees, *asperimis verbis*, in the roughest words; Mat. 23. *Wo unto you Scribes and Pharisees, Hypocrites, &c.* we may pluck off the disguise from an Hypocrite, especially when they seduce and deceive the miserable multitude by an opinion of holiness; the *Pharisees and Sadducees*, to keep up their repute, submitted to *Johns Baptism*; but

doth

doth he treat them gently? no, *Matth. 3.7. O generation of Vipers, &c. So Paul to Elymas the Sorcerer, Acts 13. O thou full of all subtilty and mischief, thou child of the Devil, and enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the holy wayes of the Lord?* In these cases there is a regard had to others, that they may not perish by too good an opinion of such deceivers; and here that of *Solomon* is of regard, *Prov. 28.4. They that forsake the Law praise the wicked, and they that keep the Law set themselves against them; a vigorous opposition doth better here then a cold dislike.*

3. For the manner, with our zeal we should still manifest love and compassion; and our way of dealing must rather be rational then passionate; there is an holy contemplation of zeal and meekness, if we could hit upon it; the same spirit that appeared in cloven tongues of fire; appeared also in the form of a Dove: the work of Righteousness may be sown in peace, *Ia. 3.18.* The Churches Garden thriveth by the cool gales of the North-wind, as well as the sultry heat of the South, *Cant. 4.* last, Gods cause should neither be neglected nor disparaged by an indiscreet carriage.

4. Concerning the principle, iee that it be good, it must not be zeal for our private concerns, but for the glory of God not a strange fire, but an holy fire; *Moses* was the meekest man upon earth in his own cause, *Numb. 12. 3.* When *Miriam* and *Aaron* spake against *Moses*, the man *Moses* was meek above all men of the Earth: when our zealous contests come from an heart bleeding for Gods dishonour, from hatred of sin, a fear of the publick, then they are right: *Lot* was vexed, not with *Sodom*s injuries, but *Sodom*s filthiness, *2 Pet. 2. 8.* When love of our Neighbour, desire of his amendment, (we are loath to suffer sin upon him), puts us upon this earnestness, your heart is upright with God; but when we seek to disgrace the men, rather then to condemn the sins, and we rage most upon the hazard of our own interest, and can be earnest against some sins and errors and comply with worse, 'tis not zeal for God, but for a party.

5. Great regard must be had to the end; a Reproof aimeth at the conviction or conversion of a sinner, but censure at his disgrace and confusion: our aim must be as right as our passion is, strong, what ever we do must not be done out of a spirit of ostension

sation or popularity, or to keep up a Devotion to our own interests: John Baptitt sharply reproveth the Pharisees, not when *condemning his person*, but when *coming to his Baptism*.

There remaineth nothing of the ninth verse to be discussed, but the last Clause, [*The Lord rebuke thee*] Though *Michael* doth not *vail*, yet he *referreth the matter to God*; Whence observe, *That in Religious contests we must carry on the opposition, though not in an unseemly manner.* *Michael* doth not let *Satan* alone, so we must not let *errours* alone, and the Devil to carry it clearly without rub and opposition; many under a pretence of meekness, are *still and silent in the cause of Christ*: cursed is this *peace and meekness*: when we let the *envious man* *see his sares*, and we never give warning; Gods Messengers are compared to *watchful Dogs*, when the Wolf cometh we must bark, if the *sleepy world* be troubled at it, we must bear their reproch.

Again, He referreth it to God, who is the fittest Patron of his own causes: *In our contests about Religion God must especially be sought unto for a blessing.* *Michael* contended, but *said, the Lord rebuke thee*; *disputing times* should also be *praying times*: prejudices will never vanish, till God send out his light and truth, *Psal. 43. 3.* and if the Devil be not *prayed down*, as well as *disputed down*, little good cometh of our contests.

VERSE X.

But these speak evil of the things they know not, but what they know naturally, as brut beasts; in those things they corrupt themselves.

IN this Verse he sheweth the disproportion between them and the *Arch-Angel*; he was modest in a *known good cause*, but these are contemptuous, and given to rayling in matters of which they are wholly ignorant: Two faults are charged upon them in this verse. 1. *Pride*, in condemning things without knowledge. 2. *Wickedness*, in abusing the knowledge they had. [*But these* εἰς] the Seducers spoken of in the Context, [*speak evil*, βλασφημῶσι] take liberty to belch out their reproaches [*of the things they know not*] what are those things? Some say, the *Dignities* before spoken of; others the *Mysteries* of the Christian

Christian faith: For the former opinion, that Clause may be alledged, vers. 8. τὰς δὲ τὰς βλασφημίας, speaking evil of dignities; and so it will imply that they were ignorant of the nature of Angels, with whom they pretended to great familiarity; * συζυγίας, as to know their courses, services; * conjugations; or else of *Vide launcum.* the nature of Church-Ordinances, they taking upon them to speak so reproachfully of the Offices which God hath set in the Church; or of the nature of Civil Power and Magistracy, they allowing themselves in such intemperate Language: But for the latter opinion, the universal Particle in the Text, ὅσα δὲ οὐκ ὀιδασί, *Whatsoever things they know not*; so Peters phrase is general, 1 Pet. 2. 12. *But these as natural brutish beasts, made to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of things they understand not*: The scope of both these Apostles being to set out these deceivers as ignorant and brutish sensualists; and yet under a pretence of great and more curious knowledge than others had, (wherefore they were called *Gnosticks*) for my part, I shall interpret the Clause generally of their ignorance in all truly spiritual matters, which was bewrayed in that they did deliver their sense in matter of Magistracy, and Church-Ministries, with some impudence and reproach; [*But what they know naturally, as brutish Beasts, in those things they corrupt themselves*;] before I come more particularly to open the words, let me tell you, that there is some difference about that Clause, [*as brutish Beasts*] to what part of the sentence it is to be referred; if to the former part, thus, [*What they know naturally, as brutish beasts*,] then the sense will be, that knowledge which they have in common with the beasts: Man is in part an Angel, in part a Beast; in his reason and upper part of the soul, he resembleth an Angel; and in his appetite and senses, a Beast; *What they know by their senses and brutish desires*; that will be the sense, if you allow of this first reference; If to the latter part, thus, [*in those things as brutish beasts they corrupt themselves*,] then it will suit with the parallel place in Peter, 2 Pet. 2. 12. οἷς ἀλογα ζῶα φυσικά, *as natural brutish beasts, made to be taken and destroyed*; and it will imply that they degenerated into beasts, notwithstanding that natural knowledge wherewith they were endowed; but to speak my own thoughts in this matter; the former reading is more agreeable to the posture of the words in the Original, ὅσα δὲ

φυσικῶς ὡς ἄλογα ζῶα διαστῆσαι, *What they naturally as brut beasts know*, in those things they are worse then beasts, corrupting and defiling themselves, by the excesses of the sensual appetite; as in *eating and drinking*, and the use of the woman in common copulation; as if there were no Law, nor limited use of those things, which yet they might discern in the beasts themselves, and the dictates of their own consciences.

This being premised, I come to explain the words [*what they know φυσικῶς, naturally*] There is a threefold light. 1. *Sense or Instinct*. 2. *Reason*. 3. *Grace*; and accordingly as a man is furnished, he may be said to be πνευματικῶς, *spiritual*, or furnished with the light of grace, or ψυχικῶς, which we translate *natural*, 1 Cor. 2. 14. it signifieth one that hath nothing but the light of a reasonable sou'. Lastly, φυσικῶς, *meerly natural*, which signifieth one guided by the *blind motion and instinct of nature*, without *reason, counsel and choice*, as the beasts are; so 'tis said here, *what they know naturally*; that is, *what they understand by natural inclination*, or the meer judgment or perception of sense, to be good or evil [*in those things they corrupt themselves*] φθίεσθαι, *are corrupted*; so Erasmus; but the word is not *simply passive*, but after the form of the Conjugation *Hishpael*, among the Hebrews, which *insert passionem in se*, it implyeth such a passion as we cause to our selves: But how do they *corrupt themselves, sinfully, or penally*? I answer, both ways; *sinfully* they corrupt and defile themselves, and so draw down punishments both upon their souls and bodies, 2 Pet. 2. 12. *They shall perish in their corruption*.

Observat. 1. Having made this way, I come to the *Observations*: And in the first place observe, *That truth is usually slandered out of ignorance*; because men do not understand the ways and things of God, therefore they do condemn them: in the Apostles days, the *Doctrine of the Cross* was accounted *foolishness* by those that knew least of it; and afterward the Christian Religion was condemned, because it *could not be heard*; Simul ac desinunt ignorare, desinunt odisse, so *Tertullian* in *Apol.* when they knew it, they could not *hate it*: 'tis the Devils cunning to keep us at a distance from truths; and therefore burdeneth them with *prejudices*, that we may *suspect* rather then *search*; and condemn that out of *ignorance*, and upon *vulgar clamour*, which *upsets knowledge*.

knowledge, we could not chuse but love and profess; and 'tis mans perverseness, and pride, to speak evil of things above his reach, and to disapprove that which they have not attained unto, or cannot understand: Nazianzen speaks of some ignorant people that condemned learning, because they had not the happiness to attain to it, *ἵνα τὸ κατ' αὐτὸν κερύμειται* saith he, Orat. 20. that their own deficiency being the more common, might be less odious; or to instance in an higher case, Papists and carnal men scoff at imputed righteousness, assurance of salvation, and the testimony of the spirit, because they are things they are utterly unacquainted with: Well then, when we declaim against things, we shoud speak out of advised knowledge, not rash zeal, See John 3. 11. *We speak that which we know, and testify that which we have seen*: zeal, as it must have a right aim, to a solid ground, to proceed upon: 'tis a vain thing to begin at the affections, and to hate before we know, Prov. 18. 13. *He that answereth a matter before he heareth it, it is a folly and shame to him*; if you light right, 'tis but an happy mistake and stumble: *quid iniquum quævis ut oderint homines quod ignorant, etiam si res meretur odium*, Tertul. ut supra. When our affections out-start our judgement, men grow obdurate in their ignorance, and will not know what they have a mind to hate; *Maluit nescire quia jam oderunt*, as Tertullian goeth on: rash prejudices engaging men in opposition, they will not owne the truth when represented to them; having hated it without knowledge, they hate it against knowledge, and so are hardened against the ways of God, which is the case of many, who in a blind zeal have appeared against the publick Ministry and Ordinances; and being engaged, are loth to strike sayl; and lay down their defiance, when sufficient conviction is offered.

Observe again, *Blockish and stupid men are most bold in reproaching*: a fools wrath falleth very heavy, because it falleth with all its weight, there being nothing to restrain and stop it, Prov. 27. 3. *A stone is heavy, and sand is weighty, but a fools wrath is heavier then them both*; when the mind is void of judgement, 'tis more overcome and carried out in the way of a naughty passion; usually we find it, the weakest spirits are most violent, there being nothing of judgement to counter-balance affection; men are all flame and rage: Liquors when they run low,

low, and are upon the dregs, they grow more tart and sowre; so 'tis usually with the dregs of men; for when they are weak and run in low parts, their opposition is most troublesome: What ado in the Ministry have we with *young heady Professors*, that have more *heat* than *light*? And how troublesome are those *wild Seditaries*, that have only knowledge enough to prate a little against the undoubted Ordinances of Jesus Christ? for there being nothing of *knowledge* and *civility* to restrain them, they easily give vent to the excesses of their passion, by *clamour* and *evil speaking*.

Observat. 3: From the second part of the charge, observe, *That men of corrupt minds are usually sensual, and sensual men are usually men of corrupt minds; an unsound heart is best sheltered under unsound Doctrine; and carnal delights blunt and weaken the edge and intention of the mind, so that they are very liable to mistakes: Therefore on the one side, we should labour to keep the mind right, and sound in the faith: first stink first at the head; when the judgment is poisoned, the teint is soon conveyed to the affections: On the other side, adde to your knowledge temperance, 2 Pet. 1. 6. The Apostle joyneth these, because many times men of the greatest parts are overcome by appetite; and some say, that temper of body which is fit for wit and Scholarship, is much inclined this way. Solomon so famous for wisdom and knowledge was enticed by women: Oh let not fleshly lusts betray you; that's the best knowledge that endeth in temperance, or begets an holy moderation in the use of sensual pleasure; if we cannot govern our affections, we know nothing as we ought to know; nay otherwise, your knowledge will be corrupted by your affections; many Errors take their rise and beginning from evil manners and filthy lusts.*

Observat. 4. Observe again, *That wicked men lest to themselves do but abuse and corrupt that natural goodness and knowledge which they have in them.* Natural abilities are soon depraved with evil habits; he that had but one *Talent* is called a *wicked and slothful servant*, Mat. 25. 26. *slothful* for not growing better, and *wicked* for growing worse: naturally we are *blind*, and we cannot endure to be enlightened, 2 Pet. 3. 5. yea, rather we put finger in natures eye, and then there cometh on *judicial blindness*, Rom. 1. 28. we suffer lusts to blow out the candle of reason, and then

then we are justly left to the power of vile affections; certainly they do but flatter us that say, *there is a power in nature*, as to conversion, and turning to God; we are so far from improving our selves, that we *corrupt our selves in what we know naturally*, and suffer brutish lusts to *blind the mind*, and *harden the heart*.

Once more observe, *Sin where it reigneth turneth a man into a brut beast.* Plal. 49. 12. *Man being in honour abideth not, he is like the beasts that perish*; the meaning is, he abode not in the honour of his creation; hence compared to *Wolves* for their cruelty; *Dogs* for their filthiness; to *Horses* and *Mules*, for the rage of lust; to a *wild Asses Colt*, for wildness and dunness of understanding, See Jer. 5. 8. Ezek. 20. 23. Job 11. 12. Rev. 22. 15. You may see here, to what sin will bring you; with *Nebuchadnezzar* we *out-grow the heart of a man*; what he did through that deep melancholly that fell upon him by Gods judgement, Dan. 4. 32. we do spiritually; if we had *the head of a Horse*, or the *face of a Swine*, or the *Hoofs of an Ass*, how should we be looked upon as Monsters? but to have the hearts of the beasts, is worse; to be like them in the *inward man*, is more monstrous in the sight of God: Consider this, sin maketh a *beast* of you; nay, it maketh you worse then the beasts; *The Ass knoweth his owner*, &c. Isa. 1. 3. they are serviceable to their benefactors; but thou art a Rebel against God that made thee, and hath kept thee all thy days: The *luggard* is put to school to the *Ant*, Prov. 6. The beasts know the *right* and *measure*; an *Horse* or a *Dogg* will not be drunk, &c. Shall I speak one word more? Sin doth not only make a *beast* of you, but a *Devil* of you, Joh. 6. 70. *One of you is a Devil*; the Devils said, *What have we to do with thee, Jesus thou son of David?* and wicked men, *What is the Almighty?* depart from us, we desire not the knowledge of thy ways.

Again observe, *'Tis a sign of a man turned beast, to follow the passions and lusts of corrupt nature*, Why? For then the government of reason is renounced, and all is yielded up into the hands of Lust and Appetite; in men reason should have the chief governance, and exercise a coercion and restraint over our affections; but now when we yield up our selves to the *passionateness of lust*, and are transported with violence of it, it answereth to that rage which reigneth in the beasts: I shall take occasion here

Observat. 5.

Observat. 6.

here, to shew you how many ways a man turneth beast.

1. By an addictedness to *sensual pleasures and delights*: 'tis the beasts happiness to enjoy pleasures without remorse; they have no *conscience*, they are not called to an account, &c. Now he is not worthy the name of a man (saith Tully) that would willingly spend one whole day in pleasure; *We may take pleasures sometimes, but they should not take us*; that is, we should not be vehemently addicted to them.

2. When in the use of these delights we keep neither *modesty* nor *measure*; this is but, like swine, to wallow in our own filthiness; a beast can do no more; nay, many a beast would not do so much.

3. When men live by *Appetite*, rather than *Reason and conscience*; feeding without fear, and nourishing the body; but taking no care to refresh the soul; This should humble many that think highly of themselves; they do but carry a beasts heart under a mans shape; while they are wholly given up to sensual delight, pampering the body, when in the mean time the precious, but neglected, soul, may justly complain of hard usage.

Observat. 7. In the last place observe, *That sensuality doth but make way for corruption*; you may counterpoise the temptation to the sin, with the punishment; usually *secret sins*, and *sweet sins*; meet with an heavy punishment: secret sins, that do not betray us to shame may yet beget horror, when we think of what will ensue; and *sweet sins*, that intice our affections, to prevent them, we may counterballance one affection with another; delight with fear: Well then, to check the brutish rage of sensual inclinations, Say, *This will tend to my corruption*, and perishing for ever; *They that sow to the flesh shall reap corruption*, Gal. 6. 8. carnal pleasures turn to an ill account, in the issue; so Rom. 8. 13. *If ye live after the flesh ye shall dye*. The Lord fenced Eden with a flaming sword; so is the Garden of carnal delights fenced with the wrath of God; we run a great hazard to enter in: say then, shall I for a *superfluous Cup* adventure to drink a *Cup of wrath unmixed*? For pleasures here, forfeit the pleasures at Gods right hand for evermore? For a little wanton dalliance, lose the embraces of Christ, when he cometh out to receive the Saints to himself at the last day? God forbid;

VERS. XI.

Wo unto them, for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gain-saying of Corah.

Here the Apostle cometh to reckon up their sins; and he doth it by *examples*, which are suited so, that they may imply both *the sin and the punishment*: Three are produced in this Verse; That of *Cain*, to note their *malice and cruelty*; That of *Balaam*, to note their *covetousness and seduction*: That of *Corah*, to note their *faction and sedition*, against *Magistracy and Ministry*; as *Corah* and his accomplices rose up against *Moses and Aaron*.

[*Wo unto them,*] 'tis *Prophetically* spoken, not *execratorily*, as a *threatning or denunciation*, not as a *curse*. [*For they have gone in the way of Cain,*] *Cains* example is produced, because he was the *first and chief* of them that departed from the *true Church* and *pure service of God*, *Gen. 4. 16. Cain went out from the presence of the Lord, and dwelt, &c.* *Tertullian* saith he was the *Devils Patriarch*; the *first root* of the *carnal seed*, or of the *seed of the Serpent*, in whom *persecution* began: Now *Cains way* was a *way of murder*, he slew his *Brother* because he was *more righteous and godly* than himself, *1 John 3. 12.* and so they go in his way that have an *envy* and *haired* against their *holy brethren*; which many times proceedeth so far as *violence, persecution and murder*: This instance is first applied to these *Seducers*; for (if the *Targum of Jerusalem* lay true) besides the particular *grudge* which *Cain* had against *Abel*, about the *acceptance of his Sacrifice*, There was a *dispute* which hapned between them in the field, concerning the *providence of God*, and the *last judgment*, and *world to come*: * *Non est judicium, nec judex; nec solum aliud, nec merces bona pro iustis, nec pana pro impiis: nec Dei misericordia creatus est mundus, nec eius misericordia regitur, eo quod suscepta est oblatio tua cum beneplacito, mea vero non.* *Targ. Hieros.* So were these *Seducers* exasperated against the

* *Vide Niremberg. Strom. 1. cap. 17. & Glaffum l. 1. Philol. sacra. pag. 60. & Christolog. Mosaisca, dissert. 5. p. 165.*

Orthodox, not only because of the greater presence of God among them; but also because of the difference of judgment, about *Christ, the world to come, and Providence*, with other who'some Doctrines, by which godliness is maintained: Again, *Cain* slew *Abel*, so were these Gnosticks ready to break out into all violence against those that dissented from them, and stirred up the *Jews* to persecution against the Christians: *Cain* after this murder was haunted with his own Ghost, and trembled where ever he came; so doth *Cains* end attend *Cains* curse, such quakings and fears of conscience following them, where ever they went: 'tis said, *The Lord set a mark upon Cain*, Gen. 4. 15. what this mark was, is much disputed: most say it was a continual trembling and quaking throughout his body, Vide Aug. lib. 12. contra Faust. cap. 12. Chrysost. hom. 19. in Gen. And the Sept. render that, Gen. 4. 12. [Thou shalt be a Vagabond upon the earth] σὺ γὰρ ἔρημος ἔσῃ ἐν τῇ γῆ, Thou shalt be groaning and trembling upon the earth; and the word *Nod*, the name of the place where he sojourned, is by interpretation *agitation, commotio, quaking or trembling*; ἰδοὺ τρεῖς νόμοι γινώσκω τοῖς ὕστεροι, and Basil. seleuc. apud Neiremb. Stromat. 1. pag. 23. which if so, our wicked *Quakers* may see who was their *Patriarch*. Now from this first instance, observe.

Observat. 1.
* Multi adhuc
sunt qui clavum
sanguine Abelis
rubentem circumscri-
pserunt.

First, That the practice of wicked men now, and the practice of wicked men from the beginning, is still the same: * *Cains Club* (as *Bucholcer* speaketh) is still carried about in the world, stained with the blood of *Abel*; see Gal. 4. 29. But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so 'tis now: So 'twas then, so 'tis now, so it will be, while the spirit of the Devil worketh in the world; we have the same original sin which they had in former times; for a long time a disease runneth in the blood, and is continued in a line and family; but after some generations 'tis worn out; but this filth will still run as long as there is a channel of carnal generation to convey it: Again, we have the same Devil to tempt us; whoever is converted, he will never turn Christian, to be sure; and there are the same provocations and occasions to exasperate mens corruptions: Well then, let us not be over-troubled, there is no new thing under the Sun; the same Devil that rageth now, hath been a murderer from the beginning, John 8. 44. The same

same Devil that deceiveth now, was a *liar* from the beginning: Are there now that separate from all Churches of Christ? there were *Donatists* in former time; Are there now that deny the God-Head of Christ? there were *Arians* then; are there now *Ranters*, *Familists*? and there were *Gnosticks* then; are there bloody enemies of the truth? every Age can yield its *Cains*: Again, if we would better know the state of our times, let us blow off the dust from our *old presidents*; the Devil doth but play over the old game; and though the Scene be shifted and furnished with new *Actors*, the Plot is the same.

Observe again, *Hereticks and Libertines usually turn persecutors*; for 'tis said here, *They go in the way of Gain*: Satan that is a *liar*, is also a *murderer*; a false way cannot subsist without the props of *blood and cruelty*, witness the *Circumcellians*, the *Priscillianists*, the *Arians*, the *Donatists*; the *Tragedies* at *Munster*: An erroneous opinion is *touchy*, and therefore exasperates the minds of men against those that oppose it: believe not *Seducers* then; when they come in *sheeps clothing*, 'tis but that they may get a power to play the *Wolves* the better: and when *Libertines* increase, let *Magistrates* look about them; there are *Clouds* gathering together towards a dismal storm; and though they seem to be meek and full of love, while their party is contemptible; yet when they grow considerable, they appear in their colours: Again, let us bless God for the peace we enjoy; there are *swarms and droves of Locusts* abroad; but blessed be God that there is a restraint upon them, that there is a spirit of perverseness mingled with their counsels; I tell you, the great danger of the *latter times* is from *Libertines*; many fear a *second deluge of Anti-Christianism*; but that is not so probable as the *sedition insurrections of Sectaries*: What sad havoc will be made of the people of God, when once those bloody-minded wretches get power? The *latter times* are *καιροὶ χαλεποὶ*, *perillous times*, 2 Tim. 3. 1. Why? from what sort of men will the dangers arise? not from the *Anti-Christian*, or *Popish* party, so much as from a *Libertine* party; from *Quakers*, *Ranters*, *Anti-Scripturists*, *Familists*, &c. The *Anti-Christian* party carrieth things by power, and worldly greatness; but this party there described is a *creeping* party, that gets into houses, *leaderb captive silly women*, verie 6. The

Observat. 2.

Anti-Christian party abuse the Sword of, the Magistrate ; but this is a *trayterous party*, *heady*, *high-minded*, verse 4. A party rising up against Magistracy : The Anti-Christian party are stiff and obstinate in their *old forms* ; but this is a party of *Seekers*, looking for *new discoveries*, holding nothing certain in Religion ; *ever learning, and never coming, is vanity*, to the acknowledgment of the truth, verse 7.

In short, the party there described, are a party that deny civil reverence, *natural affection*, and are contemptuous despisers of the true and holy servants of Christ ; and all this carried on under a *pretence and form of godliness* ; this is the party from whence I fear such danger and disturbance, if the Lord put not an hook into their Jaws, or do not awaken the Magistrate to look to the safety, not only of Christs interests, but his own : *Cursing Baalams will soon prove bloody Cains* ; and wicked seducers, tyrannous oppressors.

The next part of the Description is, [*And ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward.* His story beginneth, *Numb. 22.* and his Tragedy you have, *Numb. 31. 8.* * *Balaam had linguam vanalem*, Oracles to sell ; so they adulterated the Doctrine of the Gospel, out of *covetousness* and *filthy lucre*. *Simon Magus*, out of whose School the Gnosticks came, would you know, buy and sell the Holy Ghost, *Acts 8.* Now after this error, 'tis said, *they ran greedily, ἐξουθενῶν*, were poured out ; 'tis a metaphor taken from a River over-flowing the banks, or from a thing poured out from a Bucker, with a full current or stream.

Now from hence Observe.

Observat. 3. 1. That the Devil enticeth his slaves to divers sins ; as to the malice of Cain, so to the covetousness of Balaam.

Observat. 4. 2. That men are usually carried into errors by the bait of gain and worldly profit, 2 Pet. 3. 3. Through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you ; that which is the root of other evils is often the root of Heresies or self-making : souls are a precious commodity ; Christ thought them worthy of his own blood ; but Seducers count them *cheap ware* ; for their own gain and worldly interests, they care not how they betray souls : yea, Christ himself is sold by them, as *Judas purchased a field with the reward of iniquity, Acts 1. 18.* Oh then beware

of

* Balaam cursed Israel for hire, against his own conscience, so did these perverters the truth.

of Covetousness, 'tis a great snare; a covetous man the Devil bath him upon the hip, and how far, or whether he will carry him, he cannot tell: *Balaam* had many good gifts; God is said to have put words in his mouth, *Numb.* 23. 26. he asketh couns. of the Lord, loath to go; yet covetousness by degrees wrought upon him.

3. From the word *ἡσυχία*, *Men sin with full bent of heart*, *Observat.* 5. and are carried on violently against all restraints of Conscience; as *Balaam*, notwithstanding the checks and disappointments which he met with in the way, *The dumb Ass* forbidding the madness of the Prophet, *2 Pet.* 2. 16. yet was still hurried on by the violent impussions of his own lust, and greedy desire of reward; so the Apostle speaketh of some that work uncleanness with greediness, *Ephes.* 4. 19. The motions of lust are rapid and violent, we are in earnest when we do the Devils work; a stone runneth down-hill with a swift motion, because of its propension and tendency that way: Oh when shall we learn to serve God as we have served Satan; our work is better, our wages better, and our Master best of all: When shall we pour out our hearts in Prayer, as we in sin? In the business of Religion we act with a great deal of dividedness and partiality; our evil works are merely evil, but our good by no means can be purely good.

4. Again observe, *That covetousness is a violent head-strong* *Observat.* 6. lust; you would think uncleanness is most violent, as having a rage, and a passionateness in it, it is so; but covetousness is more strong, and engaging not only the lighter part of the affections, but the will itself, *1 Tim.* 6. 19. He that will be rich, &c. fits of lust are earnest for the present, but this is the constant and more deliberate bent of the heart towards that which is evil; watch the more, that your feet be not taken in this snare.

The last instance is, [*perished in the gainsaying of Corah*] this is produced, to note their factious practices; you have the story of him, *Numb.* 16. being overcome with ambition he would take upon him the Priesthood; he and his accomplices made head against *Moses* and *Aaron*, but he perished in the attempt; and so will these likewise that rise up against *Magistracy* and *Ministry*, as surely as if it were already accomplished; and therefore though they were not as then born, yet they are said to perish when *Corah* perished.

From

From hence note.

Observat. 7. That *Ambition breedeth Faction*, hence *Corah* gain-said; *Dio-*
scophes loved the prebeminence, and therefore troubled the
Church, in the third Epistle of *Iohn*, 10. All suits begin first in
our own suits, men are discontented with their estate, would be
higher, and therefore break rank: *Lactantius* observeth of the
troubles of his age, thus: *Fuerunt quidam nostrorum vel minus*
stabilitâ fide, vel minus docti, vel minus cuncti; qui dissidium fa-
cerent unitatis, & ecclesiam dissiparent, sed ij quorum fides fuit
lubrica, cum deum nosse se & colere simularent, agendis opibus
& honoris studentes, affectabant maximum sacerdotium, & à po-
tioribus villis scedere cum suffragatoribus suis maluerunt quàm
eos ferre præpositos, quibus concupiebant ante præponi, &c. *Lactant.*
de vera sapientia, lib. 4. to cap. 30. 'tis an excellent thing to be
contented with our own station; *Iesus Christ* was *chadal ischim*,
Isai 53. 3. the leaving off of men, or contented to be in the low-
est rank. If God hath denied thee any condition in the world
which thou affectest, thou art not worthy of it, or it is not fit for
thee, &c.

Observat. 8. 2. Observe, *Ambition that carrieth men against Ministry*,
carrieth them against Magistracy also: *Corah* and his compani-
ons rose up against *Moses* and *Aaron*, the Church and Common-
wealth, are like the soul and the body; the one saith the better
for the welfare of the other; and seditious spirits will brook no
restraint, let them alone in the Church, and they will soon dis-
turb the State also. But of this before verse 8.

Observ. 9. Once more, The levelling humor is no new thing in the Church
of God; their plea was, *Numb.* 16. 3. *all the Lords people are ho-*
ly, or *Saints*, and why should any be set over them? let us be-
ware then of that parity which some affect; there must be Rule
and Superiority, or all will come to nought: God made the
World to consist of Hills and Valleys, and in Church and State
there must be *Governours* and governed, *Teachers* and taught;
'tis *Corahs* sin to invade Offices without a call, and to destroy
that Order which God hath established.

Observ. 10. Again Observes, *Schisms and factions in the Church bring de-*
struction in the end. Those that made a cleft in the Congrega-
tion, the Earth cleaved to swallow them up; *Christ* saith, *Woe be*
to that man by whom offences come, Matt. 18. 7. 'tis sad to take
offence,

offence, but worse to give it; all the mischief that ensueth will be reckoned to your score; surely men would be more tender in this Point, if they did but think of the punishment that sensibly overtaketh the disturbers of a well ordered society.

Again, Observe, *The Scripture speaketh of things to come as already past*, for 'tis said, *these perished*, &c. So *Revel. 14. 8. Babylon is fallen, is fallen*; what is threatned is as certain as if it were accomplished; so also for *promises*, you have the mercy, if you have the promise; by *Gods Word* all things were created and do subsist: *Let it be*, was enough to make a world, when God saith, *it shall be*, is not the thing *sure*, though *unlikely*? hath Gods Word lost any thing of its creating Power? God counteth our work done, when but intended, *Abraham offered*, &c. *Hebr. 11. 17.* Well then, let us be able by faith to see the ruine of wicked men when they reign most.

Lastly Observe, *Wicked men may read their destruction in the destruction of others that sinned before them*: They transgress the same Law, and God is as tender of it as ever, as there is the same providence to take vengeance, which is as mighty as ever; and they act out of the same lusts which God hateth as much as ever; sin is is not grown less dangerous now in the latter dayes, surely then a man would think the old world should grow wiser, having so many precedents: *Pride* may see its downfall in *Nubuchadnezzar*, *sedition* in *Corah*, *Rebellion* in *Absalom*, *violence* in *Cain*; painted *adulterousness* in *Jezebel*, *disorders* in worship, in the fall of the *Bethshemites*, the breach made upon *Uzzah*; the *usurping* of *sacred Offices* without a Call may see its danger, in the *leprosie* of *Uzziah*; there is scarce a sin of a pestilent influence, of which we have not some example, which is set up like a mark in the way, in effect saying, *Take heed, enter not here, it will prove your ruine and destruction*; or, *Look upon me, and be godly*.

VERSE XII.

These are spots in your Feasts of Charity, when they feast with you, feeding themselves without fear. Clouds they are without water, carried about of winds, Trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots.

IN the former verse the Apostle setteth them forth by examples, in this by similitudes: Let us go over the expressions apart, as the Text offereth them [*These are spots in your Feasts of Charity*] σπιλιδες; the word also signifieth *Rocks*, but is fitly here rendred *spots*, for 'tis in *Peter*, σπιλοι καὶ μῶμοι, 1 Pet. 2. 13. *Spots they are and blemishes*—so he calied them as being in themselves defiled, and to others disgraceful: or because defiling with their presence, and infecting by their example, [*in your Feasts of Love or Charity*] these were Suppers used in the Primitive times, either to manifest their brotherly Union, or for the comfort and refreshing of the poor, in obedience to Christs Injunction, Luk. 14. 12, 13. though little observed for the ends for which they were at first appointed; *divisions being hereby nourished*, 1 Cor. 11. 21. each faction by themselves taking their own supper, and *the poor excluded*, 1 Cor. 11. 22. Some dispute the lawfulness of them, it being an addition to the Lords Supper, taken up in imitation of the Heathens, and blasted by Gods Providence in the very beginning, never approved, and (it seemeth) but sleightingly spoken of: *Your Love-Feasts*, saith our Apostle; however they might be lawfully uted. *Tertullian* sheweth a lawful use of them in his time, *Tertul. in Apol. cap. 39. Coimus in catum ut ad Deum quasi manus facta, &c.* We meet together (saith he) *but by an holy conspiracy we may set upon God by a force that is welcome to him, where prayers are made, and the Scriptures opened; and after this meeting a Supper began, with Prayer, Non prius discumbitur quam oratio ad Deum praeagitur editur quantum esurientes capiunt bibitur quantum pudicis est utile; and their Discourses were such as did become the ears of God, and after washing they sang a Psalm, and so soberly departed:* Now these sensual persons did defile the love-Feast, the infamy of their lives being a scandal to the meeting, and the Church

Church far'diff for their sakes; for *Peter* maketh them to be spots, not only for their disorderly carriage at the meering it self; but because of their constant course, 2 *Pet.* 2. 13. *They count it pleasure to riot away the day time*; Partly by their undecent words, and actions, when the Christians were met together, giving up themselves to excess, 1 *Corinthians*, 1. 21. *Some are drunken; and libidinous practices*, for this was frequent in the meetings of the *Gnosticks*.

Observe hence, *That sensual persons are the spots of a Christian society*; they are not only filthy in themselves, but bring a dishonour upon the whole Church whereof they are members, *Hebrews* 12. 15. *Take heed lest any root of bitterness spring up among you, whereby many may be defiled*; Now what that root of bitterness is, he sheweth you, verse 16. *Lest there be any fornicator or prophane person, as was Esau, who sold his Birth-right for a mess of Pottage*. When any root springeth up, or breaketh out into a scandalous action, the whole society is defiled: therefore when such are discovered, they are to be cast out; for otherwise we should turn a Church into a Stye; *their spot is not as the spot of his children, Deut.* 32. 5. they have not Gods mark, but Satans; Calvin observed, that nothing doth mischief the Church so much as remissness, and kindness to wicked men; partly as they do infect by the taint of their evil examples, and partly as they bring infamy upon the body; therefore cut off these ulcerous members: Again, we learn that the purest Churches have their spots: In Christs Family there was a Devil, *Joh.* 6. *One of you is a Devil*: You would be scared to see a Devil come among you; every malicious sinner is a Devil, and every sensual sinner is a Beast: such may now and then creep into the Church, but they should not be allowed there; they that put off the nature of man are unfit for the communion of Saints; these are spots to be washed off, *Holiness is the Churches Ornament, Psal.* 93. ult. *Holiness becometh thy House, O Lord, for ever*. Again, they that are in a Church, should be the more careful; you defile your selves else and the society whereof you are members; yea, your miscarriages rest & upon Christ himself: Carnal Christians carry up and down in the world the picture of the Devil, and put Christs name upon it, and so expose it to scorn and derision in the world. 'Twas an old complaint of the Gentiles, mentioned by *Cyprian* in his Book *de duplici*

Martyrio; the words are these, *Ecce qui jactant se redemptos à Tyrannide Sathana, qui predicant se mortuos mundo, nihilominus vincuntur à cupiditatibus suis, quam nos, quos dicunt teneri sub regno Sathana; quid prodest illis Baptismus, quid prodest Spiritus sanctus, cujus arbitrio dicunt se temperari? &c.* So in *Salvians* time, the Heathens were wont to upbraid the Christians thus; *Ubi est Catholica Lex, quam credunt? Ubi sunt Pietatis & Castitatis exempla, quæ discunt? Evangelia legunt & impudici sunt, Apostolos audiunt & inebriantur, Christum sequuntur & scortantur; &c.* They talk of an holy Christ, and yet are unjust, unclean, wrathful, covetous; of a meek, patient Christ, and yet are rapacious and violent; of holy Apostles, and yet are impure in their Conversations: Our Authour goeth on thus, *Sancta à Christianis fierent si sancta Christus docuisset; astimari à cultoribus potest iste qui colitur, quomodo bonus magister, cujus tam malos esse videmus Discipulos?* If their Christ were an holy meek Christ, they would be better. Now judge you whether such wretches be not *spots* both to *Christ* and the *Church*, a disgrace to *Head* and *Members*; therefore all Church-members should be more watchful and circumspect than others, lest they give occasion to those that watch for their halting, to speak evil of the way of God.

The next Clause is [*When they feast with you*]. The word signifieth, to feast liberally together: this is added, to shew, that they perverted the nature of the meeting, and made that an action of *Luxury*, which was at first an action of *Charity*: in the Feasts of the Godly there was moderation and temperance, but these were blicke and jocund, filling their paunches at the charge of the Church: What we translate *feasting with you*, others read, *feasting upon you*; and 2 *Peter* 2. 13. *Sporting themselves with their own deceivings, while they feast with you*: that is, by carnal Gosselling and subtle devices justifying their own intemperance. Whence note,

Observ. 2.

2. That 'tis an odious filthiness to make Religion serve our bellies, and to turn Charity into Luxury. This is here charged upon them, and often practised in the world, Ro. 16. 17. *They serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly*; Christ hath the name, but the belly the respect: so *Phil.* 3. 19. *Whose God is their belly*. When men aim at nothing but their own ease and pleasure, they

they set the belly in Gods stead: Among the Papists, *Religious houses* are but so many *styes of filthiness*; and the charity of well-meaning persons diverted, to feed the luxury of a few *slow bellies*: Well then, those that live upon *Church-maintenance* should be the more sober and temperate; though a *double portion* will well become them that take *double pains*, yet you should take heed of luxury, that you may not be corrupted with ease; that you may have enough for charity; that you may silence the clamours of the world, your temperance and sobriety should be known to all men. *Paul* giveth such an account of his life, as will shame most Ministers when they think of it, 2 Cor. 11. 27. *In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness*; and *Paul* had his enforced fasts, his voluntary fasts, notwithstanding his great pains; our lives should carry some proportion; we do not always suffer persecution, but we should still have a *weaned heart* in the fullest estate that doth befall us: certainly maintenance would be more cheerfully given, if well used.

Feeding themselves without fear πομαίνοντες εαυτὸς, feeding themselves as a Shepherd doth his sheep; it noteth their excess, eating beyond all measure, and without respect to that communion that should be among Saints: they fed themselves, not others; their own bodies, not others souls, Ezek. 34. 2, 3. *Ye feed your selves, but the flocks have ye not fed.*

Whence note,

That at our Meetings and Feasts we should have respect to Observat. 3. Christian communion; Not only take in meats, but give our gracious discourses and instructions: Christ when he sat at meat, raiseth their thoughts to a better Banquet, Luke 14. 15. *Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the Kingdom of God*: when the body is fed, let not the soul be neglected; the Word of God is χιλα & ψυχῶν, the food of souls; it should not be wholly banished from our Tables; at every meal the devil usually bringeth his dish; when our hearts are warmed with the use of the creature he setteth our corruptions a working, and we are ready to censure, or to brawl, or jest in an unseemly manner; 'tis but reason that Christ should set his dish upon our Tables also; and it being a solemn time of coming together, we should take occasion to quicken each other to the love of God, and an affe-

tionate remembrance of our Creatour, by whose bounty we enjoy what is set before us, that the spiritual appetite may be refreshed as well as the bodily.

Here is yet another word in this clause, ἀπόφως [*without fear.*] The meaning may be, either *without fear of God*, or *without fear of the Church*, or *without fear of the snare in the creature*. If you take the first sence, *without fear of God*, you may either understand it of his *presence* or *judgments*. 1. *Of his presence*. They had no dread of him before whom the Assembly was met. Note thence,

Observat. 4. *Tis sinful to sit down at meat without thoughts of God: You shall see 'tis said, *Exod. 18. 12.* That the Elders of Israel did eat bread with Moses his father in law before the Lord; that is, in his presence: when thou art eating bread, thou art before the Lord; as the * eyes of all things look up unto him for meat in due season, so are Gods eyes upon us, upon our carriage and behaviour; therefore still retain a dread of his presence; the fear of God is a grace that is never out of season: *Be thou in the fear of God all the day long*; not only in the morning, when immediately employed in acts of worship, but in thy shop, at thy meals; as the lungs are in continual exercise whether we are sleeping or waking, so are some graces: Who is it that giveth us food and gladness? *Acts 14.* Shall we forget God, when he remembreth us most? The Lord forbid; when his creatures are in our hands, let his eye be in our thoughts, *Deut. 8. 10, 11.* When thou hast eaten, and art full, beware that thou forget not the Lord thy God; 'twill be a good curb to our loose and vain affections.

Observat. 5. 2. Without a fear of his judgments. Thence note, That riot and voluptuous living bringeth a brawn upon the heart; and men that are given up to a luxurious course grow secure. They that did drink wine in bowls did put far away the evil day, *Amos 6. 3.* that is, all thought and sense of approaching judgments: When Jerusalem was grown riotous, she grew careless; and therefore God biddeth the Prophet to eat his bread in trembling, *Ezek. 18. 22.* Well then, avoid immoderation in carnal pleasures, as you would avoid security and hardness of heart. We lose our tenderness, by bathing and steeping the soul in these delights: Epicures are past feeling, *Eph. 4. 19.* and the Wanton

is said to be dead while she liveth, 1 Tim. 5. 6. Wine and women take away the heart, Hof. 4. 11. as they do extinguish every spark of conscience, and abate of the vigour and tenderness of our affections: 'Twas, and 'tis the opinion of Libertines, that 'tis perfection to get the victory of conscience, and to live as we list, without any trouble and sense of danger: possibly such a thing may be aimed at here; 'tis the perfection of sinning (I confess) to do evil, and then to choak the Conscience with carnal pleasures, that we may not fear evil.

2. You may expound it, *without fear of the Church then assembled*; in such an holy meeting they were not awed from riotous practices: Whence Note,

That sensuality maketh men impudent. Partly, because where spiritual sense is gone, shame is gone; partly, because when the bodily spirits are warmed with wine and meat, men grow bold and venturous; Solomon saith, Prov. 23. 33. *The drunkards heart shall utter perverse things*; in such a case men take a liberty to speak or do any thing that is unseemly: I do not exclude this sense, because Peter in the parallel place maketh them all along presumptuous and sensual, 2 Pet. 2. 10, 11, 12, 13, 14. Observat. 6.

3. You may expound it, *Without fear of the snare in the creatures.*

Whence observe,

In the use of pleasures and outward comforts there should be much caution. When Jobs sons feasted, he falleth to sacrifice, lest they should have sinned against God, Job 1. 5. 'Tis good to be jealous of our selves with an holy jealousy, lest unawares we meet with a snare in our Cup, or Dish: At a feast there are more guests then are invited; evil spirits haunt such meetings, they watch to surprize us in and by the creature; and therefore we should watch, especially if we be given to appetite, then put a knife to thy throat, as Solomon saith; that which is sweet to the palate may wound the soul; and gluttony may creep upon good men before they are aware; as Austin confesseth, that he was far from drunkenness, but *crapula nonnunquam surrepit servo tuo*; sometimes he would eat too much, but (saith he) *Lord thou hast now taught me to use my meat as my medicine, to repair nature, not to oppress it; an holy course, and to be imitated.* Christians, you may think it needless that we should speak

speaking to you about your meat and drink; as if the *light of conscience* were pregnant and active enough to warn you in such cases: Oh! but you cannot be too cautious, the throat is a slippery place, and a sin may get down ere you are aware: Christ did not think it needless to warn his own Disciples of excess, Luke 21:34. *Take heed to your selves, lest ye be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness, &c.*

The next Clause is, [Clouds. *They are without water, carried about of winds;*] Here now comes in an heap of similitudes, to express their vain arrogance and ostentation, in professing themselves to be far above what indeed they were; though they were unapt to teach, and to every good work. reprobates, yet they gave out as if they were *illuminate men*, and of an *higher attainment* than others. The first similitude is in these words, [*νεφελαι ἀνυδροι, clouds without water.*] Aristotle called barren and light clouds, such as are carried up and down with the winds, *ἀμικλας*; and to these are the Seducers likened; because, though they seem to look black, and promise rain, yet they do not give us one drop, one wholesome notion that may occasion more light in the understanding of saving Doctrine, or any further relief for the poor thirsty conscience, or any more forcible excitement to the practise and power of godliness: The Apostle Peter hath two similitudes; *Wells without water; and Clouds carried about with a tempest*; but here they are contracted into one; if you will have the Holy Ghosts own comment upon this similitude, see Proverbs 25: 14. *He that boasteth of a false gift, is like clouds and winds without rain*: That which is observable is,

1 Pet. 2. 17.

Observat. 8: 1. *That the Word of God is like a moistening rainy Cloud*, Deut. 32. 2. *My Doctrine shall distil like the dew, and my speech like the small rain*; among the Hebrews, the same word signifieth to *teach* and to *rain*; Well then, let us *parched ground* wait for the droppings of Gods Clouds: in this time of drowth, when you go abroad into the fields, you shall see the grass burnt, and turned into stubble, and the earth gaping for a refreshing, and with a silent eloquence begging for the influence of the Heavens; every chap is a mouth opened to swallow up the clouds as soon as they fall, or a cry to the God of Heaven for a little rain; just so should you come to wait upon
God

God in the Word; *My soul desireth after thee as a thirsty Land*, *Psal. 143. 6.* Oh for a little refreshing from the presence of the Lord in his Ordinance; promise your selves also that from the Word which you would from rain, *Isa. 55. 10, 11.* this is the means by which the grace of God soaketh into the heart to make it fruitful.

2. *False Teachers are Clouds without rain*; 'Tis the proposition of the Text; Partly, because they make shew of more then they have, they *boast of a false gift*, *Prov. 25. 14.* There is a great deal of shew, to affect the minds of the simple, but little of substance and truth; like Boxes in the Apothecaries Shop, that have a fair Title, but no Medicine in them; much pretence of *light and spirit*; and when all comes to all, there is nothing but *pride and boldness*; *Aperiunt fontes doctrinae, sed non habent aquam scientiae*; they will adventure to rain, When they have but a few heat-drops, a few poor fragments of truth, which being disguised and transformed into some strange conceits, are cryed up for *rare mysteries and attainments*: However, thus much we learn from them, That 'tis seducer-like, to promise more then we can perform, and to be much in the pretence, when we have little of real and true solid worth: Partly, because they do not that good to others which they promise to do; Satan will always be found a liar; 'tis the property of his instruments to beguile men into a false expectation: Papists cry up their Masses and Indulgences, which yet do not one penny worth of good: Preachers that study pomp and ostentation come with fancy and appearance; but alas these airy notions are too fine for the conscience; Seducers pretend to some *heights of discovery*, as if they would carry you into the third Heaven; but you are where you were at first; they promise you *hidden Manana*, rare discoveries of Christ; but is your heart the better? two things they never do, which may be explained by two properties of rain: Namely, *Refreshing the earth*, and making it fruitful.

Observat. 9.

1. *Refreshing the earth*; Do they offer any Doctrine that will give the conscience solid comfort and relief in distress? here you will finde them *barren Clouds*; the *Locusts* tormented the dwellers on the earth, *Revel. 9. 5.* they tickle the fancy for a while, but when you come to dye, and are serious, you must

Jer. 6. 16.

must return to the *old truths* to find rest for your souls; your fancies then are like the *Brooks of Teman consumed out of their place*: when *Pharaoh* was under any trouble, *Moses* and *Aaron* must be sent for; his *Magicians* could not satisfy him, nor ease him.

2. *To make the earth fruitful*; do you find holiness improved by their Notions, 2 Pet. 2. 19. *They promise liberty, when you are the servants of corruption*; they promise a new way of mortification, but still your bondage under your lusts is increased.

Again, in the third place, False Teachers are light, easily driven up and down in various motions; *Carried about of winds*, 'tis said in the Text, sometimes with this opinion, and sometimes with that; as light Clouds yield to the motion of the winds; the winds are there corrupt passions, lusts and interests, Eph. 4. 14. *Be not tossed about with every wind of Doctrine*, *πνευμαθισμῶναι*, carried round the Card and Compass; when the chain of truth is once broken, man is at large, and being taken off from his bottom left loose to strange contrary winds; we see many scrupulous persons, that at first made conscience of all things, afterward to grow so loose as to make conscience of nothing.

Again, They are *as Clouds driven with a tempest*; so Peter: they do not yield rain, but breed *Factions* and *Schisms*, and *turbulent Commotions*; light Clouds are driven with great violence: Well then, *Mark them that cause divisions and offences*, Romans 16. 17. they are not what they seem to be; you will find in the end, that you get nothing by dancing after their pipe.

We go on with the Verse; [*Trees whose fruit withereth, twice dead, plucked up by the roots*;] This is the second similitude; here are four Properties of evil Trees reckoned up, by way of Gradation.

The first is, [*Trees whose fruit withereth*;] let us first look to the Grammatical interpretation of these words, and then the sense and accommodation of them: *ξύδεν αὐθιγὰ ὀλέσκειν*, the vulgar readeth *Arbores Autumnales**, in Autumn things begin to decay, and Trees lose both fruit and leaves; and so would some explain it; like Trees that lose their leaves in Harvest-time, and bring forth

* Lethifer Autumnus Juvenal.

no fruit: some go another way, making it an allusion to a particular experiment of young plants, who if they flower at Autumn, husband-men take it for a sure sign that they will dye: But similitudes are taken from things usual and known; I suppose, therefore, the Apostle useth the word in its native and original signification; 'tis derived *μαρ τὰ φθιμένα τὰς πλάγας*, from corrupting fruits; and the meaning is, they bring forth no fruit but what is rotten and withered; and so 'tis applied to these seducers, whose lives were not full of good fruits: they pretend much, but what fruits do you find? *more Holiness, true Mortification, Strictness, Piety to God, or Equity, and Mercy to men?* nay rather, all manner of *brutishness, and disobedience to civil powers, neglect of God, abuse of the Gospel, contempt of their Betters, &c.*

Observe: *Corrupt Doctrine produceth corrupt fruits: Principles have an influence upon the life and conversation; our Saviour directeth us to this way of scrutiny and trial, Mat. 7. 16. By their fruits you shall know them; how can that be, since they do easily counterfeit an holiness; 'tis said before, they come in sheep's clothing. I Answer, Pretences will not last long; observe them narrowly, and you will find the wolf breaking out; I, but may not a good way be promoted by men of an ill life? Answ. Look to the fruits of the Doctrine; if it hath no influence upon strictness, but be only curious, and tend to foment pride, malice, envy, sedition, and turbulent practises, and contempt of Superiours; certainly, 'tis naught; whoever brings you that Doctrine, whatever holiness they pretend in other things: on the contrary side, the wisdom that is from above is full of good fruits, Jam. 3. 17. Mercy, Justice, Piety, Strictness, Meekness, &c. the Lord seal-eth the integrity of faithful Teachers by guiding them to holiness; and by his judgements suffereth Hypocrites and Seducers to discover their filthiness and shame, that they may be manifested to the Congregation. Prov. 26. 26. Holiness hath been the usual badge of truth; and the professors of it, when watched, have been in no point liable to exception, but in the matter of their God. Pliny could find no fault with the Christians, but that they worshipped one Christ, whom they owned for a God, and had their *Hymnos Antelucanos*, their morning-meetings, and Songs of praise to him: one of the Notes by which the inquirers of the *Waldenses* descryed them, was, that they were *sobrii & modesti vultu & habitu*.*

Observe. at. 10.

See Dr. Ham-
mond's pract.

Car. p. 141, 145

bitu, of a sober deportment, and modest garb: But may not seducers put on a demure garb: as Swenckfield prayed much, lived soberly, but his Doctrine tended to looseness, destroyed the person of Christ, &c. I Answer, as before, you must consider the aim of the Doctrine, which is not always to be discovered by the life of the first broacher of the error; Satan may transform himself into an Angel of light, to set on a design of darkness; paint will in time wear away. *Cito ad naturam sua reciderunt suam*, 2 Tim. 3. 9. They shall proceed no further, for their folly shall be made manifest to all men; they begin with great shews at first to gain credit and entrance; but a discerning eye may find the deceit, and in due time God will discover them to the Congregation: Well then, try ways and persons by this Note,

1. *Ways*, men do not easily teach point-blank contrary to their manners; surely the Devil would not assist to bring holiness in fashion, and promote Christian practice; observe the fruits and evils both of their lives and Doctrines; in two cases 'tis a sure Note: 1. When there is a fair compliance between principles and practices; if neglect of God, mutinous practices, fraud, injustice, contempt of civil dignity, be the very aim and design of the Doctrine, and accordingly men live, this is of the Devil. 2. If it be so generally, and in the most zealous of this way; some men are of a reserved temper, not disposed to gross and sensual wickedness, and so can counterfeit the better; and possibly so much of truth as they do retain, in the midst of their errors, may somewhat operate to sanctification; and on the other side, a true way may be prejudiced, if we should look to one or two; a street is not measured by the sink and channel; but if it be usual, and for the most part so, then their principles are corrupt. 3. We may not be always inticed to a course of looseness, or gross wickedness; if it be to a dead powerless course, or formality; if it weaken the life and power of godliness in you; from such turn away, 1 Tim. 3. 5. your love to God, and delight in God, and converse with him in the Spirit, is forcibly lessened; fear the influence of such an opinion.

2. You may judge of persons by it, especially your selves; where ever there is grace, there will be fruits of grace, and corrupt fruits shew a naughty tree; if the clusters be clusters of Sodom, and the grapes grapes of Gomorrah, it sheweth the Vine was of that race and

and kind. *Ephes. 5. 9. The fruit of the Spirit is righteousness, goodness and truth*; the Apostle instanteth in such fruits as concern civil commerce; partly because by these we adorn our profession, and set it off to others; partly because here we have a frequent trial, these graces being of a daily use and exercise.

But I would rather apply it, by way of Exhortation, to those that profess the truth, to honour it in their lives; let your *Manners be Orthodox*, lest you expose the ways of God to suspicion, *Mat. 3. 8. Bring forth fruits worthy of repentance, αἵμα μετάνοιας*, beseeeming the change of your minds.

Obfert. 17.

2. The next evil property is, *ἀκαρτε*, without fruit, and in the Application it implieth that they bring no honour to God, no good to others, neither are they wise for their own souls. To be barren and unfruitful under a profession of Christ, is a sign of great Hypocrisie; he that bid his Talent is called a naughty servant, and because of his unprofitableness cast into utter darkness, *Mat. 25. A Vine* is good for nothing if it be not fruitful, not so much as to make a pin in the wall. Now God compareth *Israel* to an empty vine, *Hos. 10. 11.* because they poured out all their strength, and time, and care, upon their own interests: Well then, *Be not barren and unfruitful in the knowledge of Jesus Christ*, *2 Pet. 1. 8.* Grace is an active thing, where it is, it will shew it self; garden trees must not be like the trees of the forest; if you would be fruitful,

1. You must be planted with a right seed; a wild Vine will yeild but wild grapes: The Trees of righteousness are of the Lords own planting, *Isa. 61. 3.* and when you are grafted into the Noble Vine, Christ Jesus, then are you laden with Clusters, like the Vine of *Esheol*, *John 15. 2. In me ye shall bring forth much fruit.*

2. There must be good husbandry and culture, *Isai. 5. 2, 3. Psal. 13. 14. Planted in the Courts of God, &c.* that's the kindly soil; good fruit needeth the manure of Ordinances, wild plants grow and bear of their own accord.

3. This fruit must be ripe, not buds and blossoms, but fruits; you must not be almost, but altogether; there must be not only the flowers and leaves of profession, but the solid works of goodness; 'tis said here, *trees without fruit*; 'tis not said here, *trees without leaves*; see *Joh. 15. 4.* here are branches in the Vine, that are only *Pampinarii*.

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4. Fruit

4. *Fruit is for the owner*; the profit of trees returneth to the husband-man and master, see *Job. 15. 8.* and *Phil. 1. 11.* the spiritual life beginneth in God, and its tendency is to him: God must have the glory of all, but you shall not be without the comfort of it, *Rom. 6. 22.* *Ye have your fruit to holiness, and the end everlasting life*; the grave is but a winter, it taketh off your leaves and verdure for the present, the sap and life remaineth in the roots.

The next evil property taken from trees, and applied to men, is [*δις αὐτο θάψεται, twice dead*] if you apply this to the tree, they may be *twice dead*, either in regard of fruit; as a barren thing is said to be dead, as the *barrenness of Sarah's womb*, *Rom. 4. 19.* Or in regard of substance, rotten, and like doaty trees, growing worse and worse; or *twice dead*, by an Hebraisme, *very dead*, as *double* is put for much; but now if you look to the red-dition of this similitude, these seducters are *twice dead*, both in regard of their *natural estate*, dead in trespasses and sins, and their *Apostasy*, or decay of that life which they seemed to have by the grace of the Gospel: wilful defection making their case incurable, *Heb. 6. 5, 6.* *2 Pet. 2. 20.*

Observat. 12. Now in this description you may observe a gradation, 1. *Whose fruit withereth.* 2. *Without fruit.* 3. *Twice dead.* First, *bad fruit*, and then *leaves*, and then *rottenness*. Note, That deceivers and hypocrites grow worse and worse: you have it from the Apostle Paul also, *2 Tim. 3. 13.* *But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived*; they deceive others, and the devil deceiveth them; the two states are now at a stay, wicked men grow worse and worse, and godly men grow better and better: observe then, which way is your progress and growth; the *glory of the Lord*, in *Ezekiel*, departed by degrees, first from the *holy place*, then from the *Altar of burnt offering*, then the *threshold of the house*, then the *City*, then the *mountain which is on the East side of the City*; it stood hovering there as loath to be gone: So the Spirit of God doth not all at once depart from men, but by degrees: first men *suspect* duties, then *dissuade* against them, then *shake them off*, and then come to *brautiness* and *profaness*: Or if you will, take the gradation thus, first God is cast out of the *Closet*, private intercourses are neglected; then out of the *Family*, then out of the *Congregation*, and

and publick Ordinances seem useles things; and then *blasphemies*, and a *profane vertiginous spirit* ensueth: first men begin to wrangle, and sceptically to debate matters of Religion, and within a while to oppose the truth; *the beginning is foolishness, and the latter end is mischievous madness*, Ecclesi. 10. 13.

Again, I observe, Men that fall off from the profession of the *truth*, are twice dead. To natural, they bring on judicial hardness; when they seemed to make some escape from the misery of nature, they relapse into it again, and then their chains are doubled: As a prisoner that hath once broken prison, if taken again, is loaden with irons; Two ways do natural men come to be twice dead, By custom in sinning, and by a revolt from God after they had given their names to him: By custom in sinning, for by that means they are hardened in their way, and given up to a *reprobate mind*, so as to lose all sense of sin, Rom. 1. 26, 28. and by revolt from God; those that will after trial forsake him, no wonder if God leave them to their own choice, to be held under the power of the Devil, by a dark and foolish heart.

There is one clause yet remaining [*ἐκὼς ῥίζης*, plucked up by the roots.] And then trees are past all hope of springing and sprouting again: and so it fitly noteth their incurable Apostacy; in this latter clause is set forth: 1. Their being deprived of all spirituall communion with Christ and his mystical body. 2. Their incapacity to bring forth fruit. 3. Their readines for burning and destruction. Note,

That barren and corrupt Trees shall utterly be rooted out of Gods Vineyard: they shall not have a visible abode and standing there: Now this is brought to pass, partly by their own act, 1 Job. 2. 19. *They went out from us, because they were not of us; for if they were of us, they would have continued with us*: they separated themselves from the communion of the faithful, to which they did never truly belong, both from the doctrine professed in the Church, and fellowship with them in the use of Ordinances: partly by Gods act, an act of judgement on his part, Rom. 11. 20. *for unbelief were they broken off*; partly by the act of the Church; by which scandalous sinners are taken from among them, 1 Cor. 5. 13. *Put away from among you selves that wicked person*: well then, let us walk so, that this heavy judgement may never be laid upon us; let us get a real union with Christ, for then we can

can never be broken off; you can no more sever the leaven and the dough, then a Christ and a Believer, &c. Walk with the more caution, *Be not high-minded, but fear*; 'tis dreadful to be cast out of the true Church; the finger that is cut off from the hand, is also cut off from the head: That censure, if rightly administred against us, should be matter of great sorrow and humiliation to us, &c.

V E R S E X I I I.

Raging Waves of the Sea, foaming out their own shame; wandring Stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever.

HERE are two other comparisons; the one taken from *raging waves*, the other from *wandring Stars*: For the first [*Raging waves of the Sea, foaming out their own shame*] There is a great deal of variety among Interpreters in the application or accommodation of this similitude; some go one way, some another; Waves are not more various and uncertain in their motions, then they in their expositions; some apply it to their *levity* and *inconstancy*, some to their *restless activity* in sin, some to their *turbulency*, others to their *pride* and *ostentation*; in such uncertainty what shall we fix upon? Two things will direct us, the *scope*, and the *force of the words*: The scope of the Apostle, in all these similitudes, is to shew, that these seducers were nothing less then what they pretended to be: *Clouds*, but dry barren clouds; *Trees*, but such as bore either none, or rotten fruit: *Waves* that seemed to mount up unto heaven, and to promise great matters, as if they would swallow up the whole earth, but being dashed against a Rock, all this raging and swelling turneth into a little foam and froth. So Calvin applyeth it to the *Libertines*, who scorn and disdain the common forms of speech, and talk of *illumination* and *deification*, so that their hearers seem to be rapt into the heavens, but alas, they suddenly fall into beastly errors.

From

From the scope observe, *That spiritual boasters will certainly Observe at. 1. come short of their great promises*: All is but noise, such as is made by empty vessels; in the latter times you are troubled with boasters, 2 Tim. 3. 2. men that boast of *depth*, and seem to be wise and knowing above the ordinary sort, that will pretend to shew you *new ways*; a shorter cut to heaven, and rare discoveries of Christ, and Gospel-light, &c. but alas, in the issue, they leave you much more the servants of sin than you were before.

But let us a little examine the force of the words; the whole similitude alludeth to what is said of wicked men in general, Isa. 57. 20. *The wicked are like a troubled Sea, that cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt.*

Observe in the first place, that they are *Waves*, which noteth *Observe. 2. their Inconstancy*, Gen. 49. 4. *Reuben is unstable as water*: water (you know) is moveable, soon furled and driven to and fro by the winds, so were these *carried about with every wind of Doctrine*, Eph. 4. 14. Note thence,

That Seducers are unsettled and uncertain in their opinions; so 2 Pet. 3. 16. *Unlearned and unstable*; if you ask, why? Because they are not rooted and grounded in their profession, but led by *sudden affection and interests*, rather than judgement; they are *unstable*, because *unlearned*; such as do not proceed upon clear and certain grounds; and those whom they work upon are of no principles; beguiling *unstable souls*: well then, discover them by their levity; you will never have comfort and certainty in following them who like weather-cocks turn with every wind. Ezebius is infamous to all ages, see *Sorat. Schlast, lib. 3. cap. 2.* He was Professor of Eloquence at *Constantinople*, under *Constantinus* zealous of Christian Religion, under *Julian* a Pagan, and when he was dead, he professed Christianity again; but then he came weeping to the Church, *παλίσσαλὲ μὲ τὸ δῖας τὸ ἀνάστωντος*, *Tread upon me unfavoury salt, and cast me to the dunghill.* *Constantinus Chlorus*, though an Heathen, (both *Zozomen* and *Eusebius* give us the story) yet loved constancy and faithfulness in men as to their profession: he made proclamation, that whosoever would not sacrifice should be discarded, and no more retained in pay with him; but when many false Christians had renounced their profession for gain, and preserving their civil Interests, he would

not

not receive them, saying, πῶς γὰρ ἂν πότε βασιλεῖ τίςιν ἐν ἑαυτῷ τὸ κρείττον ἀνέντας ἀγνοῶμαι: How can they keep faith with their King and Emperour, that would fault in an higher matter, in the business of their God and Religion, for a small and petty Interest? Much to the same purpose there is a passage of Theodorick King of the Goths, who loved a Deacon who was of the Orthodox profession, though he himself was an Arrian; the Deacon to please the King the more, changeth his Religion, and professeth Arrianism also; but he beheadeth him, saying, εἰ τῷ θεῷ τίςιν ἐκ ἑαυτῶν, πῶς ἀνθρώπῳ ἐνείκεσιν ὑγιαίνουσιν, If thou hast not kept thy faith with God, how wilt thou preserve a good Conscience in thy duty to men? The story is in Theodoret: Some are merely Waves, rolling hither and thither in a doubtful uncertainty.

2. *Waves of the Sea*; there you have their restless activity, they are always tossed to and fro, Jer. 46. 23. The Lord shall trouble Damascus, that she shall become like a fearful Sea that cannot rest; so these cannot rest from evil, 2 Pet. 2. 14. Eyes full of Adultery, that cannot cease from sin. Observe,

Observ. 3.

Usually wicked men are of an unquiet spirit, restless in evil: They are acted by Satan, who is a restless spirit; and there is a great correspondency between their activeness in sin, and the importunity of Satans malice, 1 Pet. 5. 8. He goeth about like a roaring Lyon, seeking whom he may devour: Now you shall see the like diligence and readines in his instruments; they walk the devils round, Mat. 23. 15. Wo unto you Scribes and Pharisees, Hypocrites; for ye compass Sea and Land, to make one Proselyte, &c. Blind zeal leadeth on men, with an incessant rage, to persue others with their error, and draw them to their sect: Well then, we may learn diligence from our enemies; shall they be more busie to pervert the truth, then we to propagate it? Dan. 12. 4. Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased: Once more learn, that 'tis a sign of a naughty heart to be restless in sin, Pro. 4. 16. They sleep not unless they have done mischief, and their sleep is taken from them unless they cause some to fall.

3. *Raging waves of the Sea*; there you have their turbulency, they fill all places with troubles and strifes.

Observ. 4.

Wicked Seducers are usually of a turbulent and impetuous spirit. Why? Because they are urged by their own pride and vanity, and have lost all restraints of modesty, and are usually (as to their

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constitution) of violent and eager spirits : Well then, be not born down with *impudence* and *rage* ; there may be daring attempts, and much resolution in an ill cause : Besides, 'tis an hint to the Magistrate to look to seducers betimes, for they are *raging waves*.

4. The next expression is [*foaming out their own shame,*] as a raging sea casteth up mire and dirt ; or it alludeth to that scum and froth which the waves leave upon the rocks; and so it noteth the abominableness of their opinions and practices. Whence note,

That though Errours come in blushing, and with a modest dress, yet usually they go out of the world with a great deal of shame. They dash against the rock upon which the Church is built, and what is the issue ? They are covered with froth and foam ; 1 Cor. 3. 13. *The day shall declare it*, that is, time, whose daughter truth is ; have a little patience, and you shall see, that all that is but *hay and stubble*, which is accounted *gold* ; when *worldly interests* are unconcerned, and the *heat of contention* a little allayed, that men may have more clear discerning, and the world hath had a little more experience of the fruit of false ways and opinions, there will not need any great confutation ; evil men will sufficiently bewray their own filthiness : *Guicciardine* saith of the expedition of Charles the 9th into Italy, *that he came in like lightning, and went out like the snuff of a Candle*; so errors come in like a *raging wave*, as if they would bear all before them, but they go out like *foam and froth*, in *scorn* and *infamy* : Well then, observe the fruitlessness of all Satans attempts ; *the gates of hell shall not prevail against this Rock*, Mat. 16. 18. By the *gates of hell*, is meant *strength and counsel, power and policy* ; for in the *gates* was their *Ammunition*, and seats of *Judicature* : they that seek to slaver the Church, or deface the truth, which is the foundation of it, they do but spit against the wind the drivel, is returned upon their own faces : We often betray our trust and faith by our passions ; we have not an holy greatness of mind to look above every trouble ; contend for God, but wait upon him ; Satan may prevail a long time, but he can never carry it clearly from Christ : the *Arrians* had a day of it, but they soon grew infamous for their cruelty and baseness.

We come now to the next similitude [*wandering stars,*] ἀστὲρ πλανήτης, it may be taken two ways, properly, or improperly.

1. *Properly*, for the stars which we call *Planets*, or *wandering*, though indeed no stars wander less than they do; they have their name from the opinion and common judgement of sense, because they are not carried about the whole circuit of the heavens, but in a shorter orb and course; in themselves they have certain stated motions, and do keep the just points of their compass; *the Sun knoweth his going down*, Psal. 104. 2. *Improperly*, There are a second sort of wandering stars, which *Aristotle* calleth *ἑσπερος διαβορτας*, running and gliding stars; not stars indeed, but only dry exhalations inflamed, which glare much, and deceive the eye with an appearance of light, but soon vanish, and are quenched: Now these glancing shooting stars do excellently express the quality of these Seducers, who pretended great knowledge, being therefore called *Gnosticks*, and gave themselves for illuminate and profound Doctors, but were various and uncertain in their motions, and soon extinguished and obscured. 'Tis notable that the Apostle ransacketh all the elements for comparisons whereby to set them forth; The *Air*, *Clouds without water*; the *Earth*, barren rotten *Trees*; the *Water*, there he compareth them to raging *Waves*; the *Fire*, to *wandering stars*, which are of a fiery nature: A fruitful fancy can make use of all the world, and a willing mind cannot want objects of meditation. But let us come to observe something from this similitude.

Observat. 6.

The guides of the Lords people should be stars, but not wandering gliding stars. These seducers pretended to be stars, and great lights of the Church (which is the office of the ministers) but were indeed *wandering stars*, and such as did seduce, and cause to erre.

First, *Stars* they should be, 1. In regard of the *light of Doctrine*, Mat. 5. 14. *Ye are the light of the world*, that's Christs honour, Job. 1. 9. but he taketh his own crown, and puts it upon his servants heads, they are the light in a subordinate sense; stars, though not the *Sun*; he is the original and fountain of all light, and we are used as a means to convey it to others; thus *John* is called, Job. 6. 35. *A burning and a shining light*: He useth our service to dispel the mists of error, the night of profaness, and the darkness of false worship: you had need prize those whom God hath set over you, they are *light*, and will you quench the *light of Israel*? 2. In regard of the *luster of their conversations*; 'tis said of all Christians, Phil. 2. 15. that they should shine as lights in

in this world; they are the bright part of the world, as the stars are the shining part of heaven: as the star directed the wisemen to Christ, so they must shine, to light others by their example to him; as 'tis required of all Christians, much more of Ministers, who are placed in an higher orb and sphere: Alas! we are but dim lights, we have our spots and eclipses; but this sets the world a talking.

Secondly, They must not be *gliding, falling stars*; that's charged upon these seducers; a *false teacher*, and a *falling star* symbolizeth in three respects. 1. 'Tis but a counterfeit star; so is he an *Angel of light* only in appearance, 2 Cor. 11. 14. a true Christian should covet more to be, than to seem to be; to be *light in the Lord*, before he is a *light in the world*: Hypocrites are all for appearance. 2. In respect of the *uncertainty of its motion*; falling stars are not moved with the heavens, but with the motion of the Ayr, hither and thither, and so are no sure direction; so are they unconstant and unstable in the doctrines which they teach, running from opinion to opinion; *vagabond lights*, that seduce, not direct; as *meteors* mislead travellers out of the way. 3. In regard of the *fatal issue*; a wandering star falleth to the ground, and becometh a dark slime and jelly; so their pretences vanish at length, and they are found to be those that were never enlightened and fixed in the firmament of God; counterfeits cannot last long; we see stars shoot in the turn of an eye, and Satans instruments fall from heaven like lightning.

Well then, for a guide to heaven, chuse a star, but not a wandering star; *new light* is admired, but it should be *suspected* rather; usually we are rather for things new then excellent, *homini ingenitum est magis nova quam magna mirari*, saith Seneca, We gaze more on a Comet then the Sun: check this itch; those that are various, and given to changes, are no lights for you; and if they be not burning and shining lights, avoid them; true stars have influences; they do not only enlighten and fill you with notions, but *inflame* and stir you to practice.

The last clause of the Text is, [*To whom is reserved blackness of darkness for ever.*] Having described them in several Metaphors, he cometh to speak again of their punishment, continuing the last Metaphor, (as some suppose) as glaring Meteors after a while vanish into a perpetual night and darkness, and are no more seen

and heard of; so these vanish, and are swallowed up of the horrors of eternal darkness: In this threatening three things are notable. 1. The *dreadfulness* of the punishment. 2. The *sureness*. 3. The *suitableness* of it.

1. The *dreadfulness*, in two circumstances. 1. The *nature* of it. 2. The *duration* of it.

1. The *nature* of it; ἡ ὀχλύτης, the *blackness of darkness*; 'tis an Hebraism for exceeding great darkness, called in the Gospel τὸ ὀχλόν καὶ ἡ ἕσπερος, *outer darkness*, as being furthest from God the Fountain of life and glory, and so expressing that *extream misery, horror and torment* which is in hell. *Hell is a dark and dismal region, where men lye deprived of the light of Gods countenance, tormented with presence of Devils, and become the burden of their own thoughts, calling to remembrance their past sins, and having an actual sense of their present pains, and dreadfully looking still for future judgment; but of this * before.* Well then, let us not begin our hell our selves, by *shunning Gods presence*, by preferring carnal pleasures before the light of his countenance, by remaining in the night or darkness of ignorance or error; by darkning the glory of our holy profession, through scandalous living; by *sinning against conscience*, and so providing food for the gnawing worm, or matter of despair to our selves to all eternity. Briefly, let us beware of a *dark and doubtful condition*; it carrieth too great a proportion with hell; the more bondage we have, the more fearful looking for of judgment, the more are we like the damned; as the more assured and possessed of Gods love, the more like the blessed; joy in the Holy Ghost is the Subburbs of Heaven.

2. The next thing is the *duration*, [The *blackness of darkness FOR EVER*:] The torment prepared for the wicked is everlasting; their worm dieth not, and their fire is not quenched, Mar. 9. 44. This is the Hell of Hells, that as the torments there are *without measure, so without end*; vivere nolunt, mori nesciunt; here they might have life and would not; and now would have death, and cannot, Rev. 20. 10. *tormented for ever and ever*: Wo and alas, 'tis for ever! Poor wicked wretches, whose bodies shrink at the prick of a pin, or the flame of a candle, how will they endure those endless pains? When their restless thoughts shall have run thorow thousands of years, they must look for more; the pains of the damned

* See ver. 6. on those words, (chains of everlasting darkness) and v. 7. those words (eternal fire.)

damned are eternal; partly because of the greatness of the Majesty against whom they have sinned; we are finite creatures, and so not fit to judge of the nature of an offence against an infinite God; the Law-giver best knoweth the merit of sin, which is the transgression of the Law; as a Jeweller knoweth the price of a Jewel, and can best give sentence in the case what he is to pay that hath lost or spoiled it: With man offences of a quick execution meet with a long punishment; and the continuance of the penalty in no case is to be measured with the continuance of the act of sin; *Seculus non temporis magnitudine sed iniquitatis magnitudine metiendum est*: Partly because man sinneth as long as he can; he sinneth in *eterno suo*, (as Aquinas,) and therefore is punished in *eterno Dei*; we would live for ever, to sin for ever. * In hell * Wicked men the desire of sinning is not extinguished or mortified: Partly because they despised an eternal happiness, and therefore do justly suffer an eternal torment: Partly because they are in their final estate, *peace upon earth*, Luk. 2. 14. here God is upon a Treaty with us; but there we are beyond a possibility of repentance and pardon: Partly because their obligations to God are infinite, and so their punishment riseth according to the excess of their obligations. Well then, this representeth the folly of sinners, that will run the hazard of eternal torments for a little temporal satisfaction, as he cried out, *For how short a pleasure have I lost a Kingdom*? when he had parted with his Sovereignty for a draught of water; so you, out of a desire of present contentment, forfeit heaven, and run the hazard of the horrors of everlasting darkness; therefore to counter-balance the violence of a temptation, 'tis good to think of it; Can I dwell with everlasting burnings? If a man be sick in the night, he tumbleth and tosseth, and telleth the hours, and wisheth it were day; Oh, what will a man do that is held under an everlasting light and darkness! We are wont to think a Sermon long, a prayer long; what will hell be! When conscience shall repeat over the passages of our lives, and remember us of the wrath of God that endureth for ever! Here sin is ever working; all the day long it runneth in the mind; all the night it playeth in the fancy; we begin the morning with it, and end the day with it; and in the visions of the night it easily gets the start, and outrunneth reason and conscience; there the guilt of it will torment us day and night; and man is ever haunted with

are not changed in Hell; melted mental growth hard again; the bad thief had one out in Hell, and yet dieth blaspheming; their judgments are changed, not their hearts; they would have dallied with God longer, grieved his Spirit here in the world longer, but that their candle went out, &c.

with his own horrors, and the wrath of God inflicted upon him.

So much for the terribleness of the judgments: Now secondly, let us consider the *sureness* of it; *τελευτα*, 'tis reserved: *Observ. 9.* Hell torment is sure, prepared, kept for the wicked: so *Mat. 25.* prepared for the Devil and his Angels: Heaven is prepared for the Saints, and they for it; in one place 'tis said, *The Kingdom prepared for you*; in another, *Vessels of mercy aforehand prepared unto glory*: so is hell fitted for the wicked, and they fit themselves for Hell: God prepareth the Saints, and fitteth them; but indureth the wicked, and beareth with them whilst they fit themselves for destruction, see *Röm. 9. 22, 23.* Carnal men may Lord it abroad for a while, and ruffle and shine in worldly pomp; but the blackness of darkness is kept for them.

3. Observe the suitability of the judgment to the sin; he saith darkness, not fire: *Clouds that darken the truth are justly punished with the mists of darkness for ever.* 2 *Pet. 2. 17.* they that would quench the true light are cast into eternal darkness; God loveth to retaliate, that men may read their sin in their judgment here in the world; he may do it in mercy to the Saints; *Jacob* that came the younger for the elder, to blind *Isaac*, had the elder daughter given him instead of the younger. *Asa*, that put the Prophet in the stocks, was diseased in his feet; but in hell he doth it for the greater horror to the wicked; they that chuse left hand blessings, *Prov. 3. 16.* are justly placed with the goats on the left hand, *Mat. 25.* he that denied a crumb could not receive a drop; they that cared not for Gods company are then banished out of his presence; and to those that loved darkness more than light, is the mist of darkness reserved for ever.

VERSE.

VERSE XIV.

*And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, Prophesied of these, saying,
Behold the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his Saints.*

THE Apostle urgeth another Argument, to imply the destruction of those Seducers; and that is, *The Prophecie of Enoch*: *vid. Bez. & Estium in loc.* whether this Prophecie were written or not, the same Spirit that spake in *Enoch* inspired our Apostle; if he received it by Tradition, 'tis here made Authentick and put into the Canon; The Jews have some Relicks of this Prophecie in their Writings, and some talk of a Volumn extant in the primitive times, consisting of 4082. lines, called the *Prophecie of Enoch*; but that was condemned for spurious and Apocryphal: *Teruntian* saith, there was a Prophecie of *Enoch* kept by *Noah* in the Ark, which book is now lost; be it so; many good books may be lost, but *no Scripture*; but most probably, 'twas a Prophecie that went from hand to hand, from father to son; *Jude* saith, *Enoch Prophesied*, he doth not say, 'tis written, as quoting a passage of Scripture: But why should he rather produce *Enochs Prophecie*, then a passage out of the Authentique books of Scripture, where are many such to this purpose. I Answer, 1. It was done by the providence of God, to preserve this memorial to the Church. 2. Because antient things are more venerable; for by all mens confession those times were most simple and free; a *partium studio*, from factions and partialities; therefore all along the Apostle bringeth instances of the most antient date.

[*And Enoch, the seventh from Adam,*] that is, *inclusive*, putting *Adam* for the first; but why is this circumstance mentioned? I Answer, 1. To commend the *Antiquity of the Doctrine*, the seventh in descent from *Adam* intimates that judgment was to be administered by Christ. 2. Some observe a mystery, the *seventh person* was a Prophet, as the seventh day was holy. 3. I think 'tis to distinguish him from *Enoch* the son of *Cain*, who was the third from *Adam*, as *Enoch* the son of *Seth* was the seventh, see *Gen. 4. 17.* [*Prophesied*] That *Enoch* was a Prophet is clear here, and may be gathered from *Gen. 5. 22.* where he is said to *walk with God*, a phrase proper to those that served the Lord in some neer way of ministration; 'tis there applied to *Enoch* who was a Prophet, and to *Noah*, *Gen. 6. 9.* who was a Preacher of righteousness, 2 *Pet. 2. 5.* and

and to Eli, 1 Sam. 2. 30. who was a Priest [Of these, saying] Of these, because of such like; 'tis a general Prophecie brought down to a particular case and instance. [The Lord cometh] that is, the Lord Jesus appointed to be the Judge of the world; nay mark it, [Behold the Lord cometh] as putting it before their eyes: [cometh] *Isa.* 60. is come, that is, he shall as certainly come as if he were come already: the Jews say, the great excommunication *Maranatha*, was instituted by Enoch; the word signifieth, *The Lord cometh* [with ten thousand of his Saints] it may be rendred with his holy Myriads, or ten thousands, an uncertain number for a certain, that was their highest and roundest reckoning; the meaning is with huge multitudes of Angels and Saints: as the Apostle, 1 Thes. 3. 13. *At the coming of the Lord Jesus with all his Saints*, Zech. 14. 5. *The Lord my God shall come, and all thy Saints with thee*; not only the Angels, but the Saints do help to make up the triumphs of that day.

The Notes are these.

1. That what is spoken in the word in general doth as much concern us as if it were spoken to our own persons; Enoch Prophefied of these, &c. Particulars are comprized in their generals; some Scriptures speak directly to every single person; the Decalogue is most express this way, *Thou, thou*, &c. as aiming to awaken every one to a sense of their duty; God doth as it were talk with every of our persons immediately: the Gospel indeed speaketh largely, *come all ye*, &c. as excluding and exempting none out of the hopes of it; yet sometimes the Gospel speaking as particularly as the Law, especially where the condition is annexed to the offer, as Rom. 10. 9. *If thou believest in the Lord Jesus with thine heart*, &c. if you, as speaking to me, if thou, as speaking to thee, and every other man in particular: Well then, though the word speaketh generally, take home your own share; as men cut a passage out of the common River, to water their own fields; let not the Scriptures speak in vain, Jam. 4. 5. we are all concerned, when his speech is directed to men of our condition: *Pla.* 27. 8. *Thou saidst, seek ye my face*; and David sub-sumeth, *Thy face Lord will I seek*.

2. Prophecie or Preaching the word is antient, for Enoch the seventh from Adam Prophefied; still some have been set apart for this work; Enoch was a Prophet, and Noah a Preacher of righteousness; 'tis sad that in the latter end of six thousand years we should be rooting up an antient Ordinance, that hath stood from the beginning of the world till now; in the old time before the

the Law, there were some to teach, every Master in his Family; Churches were then in houses, and some special Prophets to instruct in publick, and continue the Tradition: under the Law also there were solemnly set apart for the work of the Tabernacle, and Prophets immediately called to deliver the special messages of God; not only for the instruction of the present age, but to encrease the Canon, or rule of faith and manners, even for our comfort: and in Christs time Apostles were added to unvail the figures of the Law, and deliver the Gospel more clearly; and when once the Canon was sealed, and enough delivered to make us wise to salvation, some were set apart by the constitution of Christ, as Pastors and Teachers, to explain and apply Scripture: and though all the Saints be Kings and Priests to God, yet the office ministerial must not be invaded; for as spiritual Kingship is no warrant to disturb the Magistrate, or to wrest the exercise of authority out of his hands, so spiritual Priesthood doth not lay the Ministry in common, but still there must be some set apart for that work: if we grudge at the institution, we repine at Christs bounty to us, and in effect bid him take his gift to himself; for in the day of his Royalty, or Ascension, *he gave gifts to men, some to be Apostles, some Prophets, some Pastors, some Teachers, &c.* Eph. 4. 11.

3. *That the Doctrine of the day of Judgment is ancient, long Observed, since foretold.* Enoch prophesied of it; yea, the sentence of death pronounced in Paradise did imply it, and the Lords messengers have ever urged the terrour of it: many passages in Moses may be applied to this purpose, Deut. 32. David clearly saith, Psal. 50. 22. *I will set thy sins in order before thee; now consider this ye that forget God, lest I tear you in peices, and there be none to deliver.* So Solomon, Eccles. 11. 9. *Remember that for all these things thou shalt come to judgment.* 'Twere needless to tell you of Daniel, Joel, Malachy, Christ, Paul, Peter, John, Jude; still this truth was pressed in the Church; nay, the Lord was pleased to grant some intimation of it to the heathens, *ὡς ἐν δ' ἡγερόθεν βασιλεὺς, &c.* in the fragments of the Sibyls, in Eusebius: by the light of Nature the Philosophers had some dark and uncertain guesses at such a thing; Conscience is soon sensible of the truth of it, as Felix trembled when it was mentioned, Acts 24. The ancient judgments of drowning the world, and burning Sodom, were types and

forerunners of it: Well then, entertain this Doctrine with the more certainty, *verum quod primum*, that which is first is true: we are secret Atheists; can a man believe judgement to come, that walloweth in sin and profaness? our actions are the best image and expression of our thoughts; the Apostle saith, *the latter days shall yield scoffers and mockers*, ● Pet. 3. there may be Atheists in the Church, but there are none in hell, we deny and doubt of that at which the devils tremble; if the Spirit, Scripture, Conscience, Reason will not teach men, there is no other way of learning but by feeling and experience.

Enoch prophesied, the man that walked with God, he could see the day of judgement, though so far off:

Observ. 4.

Those that have most communion with God, do most discern his mind. Let a man walk humbly and closely with God, and he is neer, not only the root of life, but the fountain of light, Psalm 25. 14. *The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him*: when the Disciples doubted of any thing, they pointed to him whom Jesus loved, and who leaned in Jesus bosom, Joh. 13. 21, 22, 23, 24. those that are in Christs bosom know his mind; well then, if we would pry more deeply into the things of God, walk humbly and closely with him; there is a promise, Joh. 7. 17. *He that will do the will of God shall know what doctrine is of God*: Pure souls are soonest enlightened, and they discern most of the Lords counsel who are not darkened with Lusts and Interests.

αὐθαγοὶ ἐλ-
λ-μ-ψαῖς.
Not.

5. From that [Behold] he speaketh of this day of the Lord, as if it were instant, and before their eyes:

Observ. 5.

We should always realize the day of the Lord, and represent it to our thoughts as neer at hand. 'Tis the work of faith to give things absent, and at a distance, a present being in the heart of a Believer, Heb. 11. 1. Six thousand years ago Enoch said, *Behold he cometh*; 'tis not for us to fix the seasons which the Father hath put in his own hands, there may be much of snare and temptation in that, therefore the Apostle Paul reproveth them that confidently gave it out, that the day of the Lord was at hand, 2 Thess. 2. 24. *ἐπιστῶντες*, instantly to come: St. Austin giveth a reason of it thus, *ne fortè cum transisset tempus quo cum credebant esse futurum de ipsa mercede fidei desperarent*; lest they should question all, when deceived in the time of their fore-fer-
ting,

ting; which indeed experience hath verified: In the year of Christ one thousand and one, when many vain opinions and conceits of the end of the world were disappointed, men began publickly to assert, *Mundus est incorruptibilis*, Bar. ad annum 1001. The faith of all truths is shaken, by the disappointment of a rash confidence: but though we are not punctually to state the time, yet the thing being certain, faith should represent it to the thoughts as actually present, and we should live as if the Trumpet were always sounding in our ears, and the Judge were sate, and the books opened: to put off the thought of that which will one day, and within a short time come about, is a *spice* of Atheisme, *Amos* 6. 3. for things foretold in the Word should be as certain, and have a like influence upon us, as if they were already accomplished. *Behold the Lord is come.*

6. From that [*with ten thousand of his Saints,*] *When Christ cometh to judgement, his Saints come to judge the world with him.* *Observ. 6.* When the wicked are filled with amazement, they come in Christs company; partly that the world may know what shall be done to the men whom God will honour, and that Christ may be admired in the glory he putteth upon them, *2 Thess.* 1. 10. partly that Christ may make them partakers of the mediatory Kingdom; therefore they are associated with him in judging the world, *Mat.* 19. 28. their *suffrage* is required, as approving the sentence of the Judge, *2 Cor.* 6. 2. partly for the greater sorrow of the wicked, they shall be judged by mean men, whom they once hated and persecuted, *Psal.* 49. 12. *The upright shall have dominion over them in the morning*, that is, of the resurrection; they counted their lives madness and folly, but now they are exalted: partly to make amends for the *perverse censures* of worldly men, now they are judged every day, counted the off-scouring and reproach of men; but then the Lord will clear up their innocency, and they shall sit as *Justices* with the Judge upon the Bench. Well then, 1. *Be Saints*, if you would have a Saints privilege; Felons may be jovial in the Prison, but they tremble at the Bar; they are happiest that have joy and boldness at Christs appearance; when wicked men come like miserable captives, how shall the Saints arise out of their graves like *sons of the morning*? They and Angels intermixed in the train of Christ; what is wanting here, is richly made up

there. 2. Walk as those that shall be associated with Christ in judging the world; walk with Christ now, and you shall come with him then; follow the Lamb wheresoever he goeth, when he is crowned at Hebron, he will not forget his old companions, cleave to him, cry not up a confederacy with them, that cry up a confederacy against him; he will say to you, you have been with me in all my sufferings and sorrows, now you shall be with me in my glory, *Mat. 19. 27, 28.* Again, Judge the world now, condemn them by your lives, as knowing that you shall condemn them hereafter by your vote and suffrage. Noah condemned the world, *Heb. 11. 7.* a serious Christian is a living reproof; a carnal professing hypocrite justifieth the wicked; ye have justified your sister Sodom, see *Ezek. 16.* but a sincere Christian condemneth them.

Observ. 7.

7. From that [with ten thousand of Saints] At Christs appearance his train shall consist of multitudes of Saints and holy Angels. Now they are but as two or three Berries upon the top of the uppermost bough scattered here and there, as God hath work and service for them to do; but when they appear together in that great rendezvous, they are a number which no man can number, see *Rev. 5. 11.* and *Rev. 7. 9.* 'tis a comfort against the paucity and smallness of those that are upright with God; in heaven we shall have company enough; Gods family when it cometh altogether, is very numerous, or rather innumerable, *Heb. 12. 23.* as the wicked shall be exposed to the fellowship of devils, and persons like themselves, where the company shall add to the torment, so shall we be called to a great Assembly, and to bear a part with that glorious train which cometh with Christ.

Psal. 1. 5.

VERSE XV.

To execute judgement upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly amongst them, of all their ungodly deeds, which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.

HAVING described the Judge, with his attendants, he cometh to describe his work, which is to convince, and execute judgement,

ment, together with the persons against whom he will thus proceed [All that are ungodly amongst them] as also the grounds and reasons of the Process, because of their ungodly practises, and hard speeches against Christ.

Some say the 14th verse doth only contain the Prophecie of Enoch, and that these words are the Apostle's application or explication of it, but improbably, the words running on in a continued sence or form of speech, and the application is at the 16th verse.

[To execute judgement] 'tis an *hysteron proteron*, the last act is put first, execution before conviction or arraignment, [upon all] that is, upon all such as are here spoken of, upon all the ungodly, for judgement is not executed upon the Saints, but for them. [And to convince] ἐλέγξαι, it implieth such a clear proof, that we see 'tis impossible things should be otherwise at the day of judgement, wicked men are speechless, Mat. 22. and self-condemned [all that are ungodly amongst them] that is, amongst the wicked, and the severity of the process is chiefly bent against those that are ungodly [of all their ungodly deeds] in the Greek, the deeds of their ungodliness; now ungodliness here is not taken in its proper sence for denying God his due honour and worship, but for any opposition against his servants, worship, truth [which in an ungodly manner they have committed] ὡς ἡσέβησαν, which argueth the malice and spite which they bewrayed in their oppositions and reproaches [and of all their hard speeches] σκληρῶν, [hard] applicable to things as well as speeches; our speeches are here intended, as appeareth by the following clause; wicked practises and an evil tongue are seldom severed; that by hard speeches is meant any proud, taunting, cursed, or contumelious language, see 1 Sam. 2. 3. in the Hebrew, and Psal. 94. 4. How long shall they utter and speak hard things, and the workers of iniquity boast themselves [which ungodly sinners] not only sinners, but ungodly sinners, for the greater emphasis, see Psal. 1. 1. [against him] that is, against himself, against his person, or messengers, or truths, ordinances; for what is spoken against any of these, is spoken against Christ himself.

This verse is large, and full of points; but because the Doctrine of the day of Judgement hath been already touched upon, and ungodliness opened at large, ver. 4. therefore the briefer notes will serve the turn.

1 Christis

1. *Christ's second coming is to judgement*; so 'tis said in the Text, *He shall come with ten thousand of his Saints to execute judgement*. Of his first coming 'tis said, Joh. 3. 17. *God sent not his Son to judge the world, but that the world through him should be saved*; he came not then as a Judge; but as a Redeemer, offering and procuring grace and life; when we frustrate the end of his coming as a Redeemer, we make way for the end of his coming as a Judge; and he that then came to us, will now come against us.

2. *When Christ cometh to judgement, one great part of his work will be, to convince sinners, and that openly, publicly*. Some think that the whole work will be dispatched in the Conscience, without any audible and external voice, both as to examination and sentence; others think the tryal and conviction shall be in the conscience of a sinner, but the sentence audibly pronounced; and because the punishment is to light upon body and soul, the ear is to receive it, as well as the Conscience feel it: I conceive that conviction, tryal, and sentence, will be all open and publick, though I cannot expressly say, that every particular sin shall be discovered before the whole world, yet enough manifested to shew the sentence just, as their unfaithfulness in their callings, their opposition of God and godliness, their oppression of his servants, their neglect of grace, &c. with all the circumstances and aggravations of it, as the gracious opportunities and means which they have enjoyed, stirring sermons, motions of the Spirit, checks of Conscience, blessed methods of love and mercy, &c. God keepeth an account of these things; those passages which imply Gods reckoning with his people in the world, are but pledges of what he will do at the day of our last account: now here God taketh exact notice of the long time, and many means which we have enjoyed, as Luke 13. 7. *these three years, &c.* it alludeth to the time of Christs ministry, he was just then entering upon his last half year, as by a serious harmonizing the Evangelists will appear, John 2. 54. *This second miracle did Jesus in Cana of Galilee*, account is kept of a former: 1 Kings 11. 9. — *appeared to him twice, so these twenty three years*: and Jer. 25. 3. *all this is remembered and produced to convince the sinner*.

This conviction implieth two things. 1. *The opening of the Conscience*, Rev. 20. 12. *The books were opened*, that is, the book of Conscience,

Conscience, and the book of Gods remembrance; the consciences of men shall then be extended to an exact view of all their works and deeds past; 'tis wonderful, but it shall be done by the mighty power of God; for 'tis said here, *he shall convince them of all their ungodly deeds, and hard speeches*; their works and words are not lost and forgotten, but do follow them into the other world, and stand in the view of Conscience, challenging the sinner, *tu nos egisti, opera tua sumus*; sinner, these are the things which thou hast done and spoken, we will not leave thee, but bring thee to judgment; then is that expression made good, ** their iniquities shall find them out*; our old sins, and carnal practices were long since forgotten and worn out of memory, so that we think we shall never hear of them more; but there they find us out, and pursue us to Christs Tribunal. 2. There is an outward publication and manifestation of all these sins, or of most of them, before the world; for the Apostle saith *1 Cor. 4. 5. hidden things shall be brought to light in that day*; that is, not only called to remembrance by the sinner himself, but exposed to the notice and censure of others, as the context there sheweth: so *Eccles. 12. 14. 'tis said, secret sins shall be brought to judgment*; if only discovered to the conscience of the sinner, they are still kept secret; wicked men are already in a great measure convinced, yea, and condemned in their own consciences; 'tis then Gods design to shame them before all the world; how otherwise shall the suspected innocency of his servants be vindicated, and Saints and Angels applaud the equity of his judgment, unless they have some cognizance of the matter for which wicked men are condemned? Now these sins may be discovered many ways, either by their *own confessions*, and *pitiful complaints*, extorted from them by the power of God; they shall wail and bemoan their case thus probably, *Oh that ever I despised Christ, oppressed his servants, opposed his truth, sleighted the seasons of grace, &c.* See *Rev. 6. 16, 17.* Or by the *sentence of Christ*, in the pronouncing of which there is some repetition of their sins, see *Mat. 25. 41, 42, 43.* And also by the *testimony of the good and bad Angels against them*; The good Angels and Guardians of the Saints are sensible of the injuries done to them, and may possibly accuse you to Christ upon that score, *Mat. 18. 10.* the Devil, who is now a Tempter, will then be an Accuser: One of the Fathers bringeth in the Devil

See Hos. 7. 2.
Psal. 49. 5.

* Num. 32. 23.

vil pleading thus, *Domine sit meus per culpam, qui tuus esse nolui per gratiam*, &c. Lord let him be mine by sin, who would not be thine by grace; I never died for him, had no heaven to offer him, only a little carnal pleasure or profit, and this was enough to draw him from thee, &c. yea further, the Ministers, and other godly persons, by whose example they have been reprov'd or condemn'd, may give testimony against them, *Joh. 5. 45. there is one accusing you, even Moses*, &c. The cries of those whom they have oppress'd and wronged may possibly be renewed, *James 5. 4. Abel's blood may cry out against Cain afresh; starved souls may cry out against a lazy Minister; oppress'd subjects against a bloody Magistrate*; the neglected poor, against those that have shut their bowels against them: as on the other side, the godly poor that have been refresh'd and relieved by the bounty of the rich, are said to receive them into everlasting habitations, *Luke 16. 9.* Again, the example of those that have had less means may be produced against them, because they went further in a way of compliance with the Lords purpose, *Mat. 12. 41, 42.* Others with whom we have sinned may complain of us; *Dives* was afraid lest his Brethren should come into the place of Torment, *Luke 16. 28.* which might be a means to encrease his anguish, they sinning by his example. I have produced these suppositions only to make the conviction at the day of judgment more intelligible and effective.

Observat. 3. Again observe, *When Christ hath convinced, he will condemn; and when he hath condemn'd, he will execute*: Conviction now maketh way many times for conversion, but then for confusion: now God killeth, that he may make alive; but then they are presently transmitted and sent into their everlasting estate: Let us imitate the method of Christs process in our judging our selves; let us examine, judge, execute, not our selves, but our sins; voluntary acts prevent enforced.

Observat. 4. From that [*Of all their ungodly deeds, &c.*] Observe, *That the process of the last day chiefly lieth against the ungodly.* These are expressly mentioned in the Text; *unrighteousness* is a cause of Gods wrath as well as *ungodliness*, *Rom. 2. 18.* But *ungodliness* doth chiefly provoke; for the first part, and chiefest part of the Law, provideth for our duty to God, *ex ordine modum, ex loco statum, & dignitatem uniuscujusque præcepti*, &c. The dignity of every command is known by the order of it; now in the first

Tertullian.

place,

place, *godliness* is required, and then *righteousness*, or a care of moral duties.

If you would know who are ungodly, see the notes on verse 4. where they are described at large; all *Atheists, speculative and practical, Pagans, sinners* that sleight the offers of *Christ*, that neglect communion with God, and are touched with no reverence and dread of his Majesty, all these are ungodly persons, and also all that scoff at Religion, and holiness of conversation, that despise the Ordinances of God, oppress and persecute his servants, hate his truths, these are all in the Scripture branded with the same mark, as I could easily shew you, if I listed to dilate upon this argument.

Now none of these will be able to hold up the head in the day of Judgement, *Psal. 1. 5. The ungodly shall not stand in judgement, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous*; for since they hate or neglect God, how shall they be able to look him in the face, or appear among his servants? They that have despised the mystery of *godliness*, how can they expect the reward of *godli-* 1 Tim. 2. 6:
ness? You that mock at *godliness*, make Duties the objects of 1 Tim. 6. 3.
your scorn, not *your care*; how will Christ scorn you at the last day? Well then, if you would have the day of judgement comfortable to you, be not only *just and strict*, but *godly*, for *godliness* is a notion distinct from *holiness*, 2 Pet. 3. 11. 'tis not enough to do actions *just and good*, but we must do them upon the sight of Gods will, and with aims at his glory: *holiness* implyeth a conformity to the Law of God, but *godliness* an unfeigned respect to his glory: now a Christians whole life should have such a tendency and ordination, for 'tis called a *living to God*, Gal. 2. 19.

Once more observe, These *ungodly men* are the rather judged, *because they commit sin with an ungodly mind, or sin with a sinning* *Objerv. 5.*
mind; for so 'tis in the Text; *ungodly deeds ungodly committed*: A child of God may fall into wickedness, but he doth not commit it wickedly, with a *full consent*; men are not condemned for *infirmities*, but *iniquities*; as a child of God cannot act with such liberty, purity and perfection in the ways of God, as he doth desire, so in the ways of sin he cannot do what he would, nor be carried out with such a full bent and purpose of heart, as wicked men are, because of the opposition of the new nature;

to this latter sence is it said, *Gal. 5. 17. Ye cannot do the things that ye would*, as will appear by a serious inspection of the context: wicked men follow the Devils work with all their might, *Micah 7. 3. They do evil with both hands, earnestly*: the Lord that is tender of those that sin through infirmity, yet taketh notice to the purpose when men sin for sins sake, and their hearts are largely and eagerly set upon it; those that are disclaimed at the day of judgement are called *workers of iniquity*, *Mat. 7. 23.* such as make a business and a trade of it; a godly man doth not so much *act sin* as he *suffereth* by it, *peccatum patitur non facit*, Bernard. He doth not pour out his whole heart this way; there are constant dislikes in the soul, which are a let and restraint to him; usually the sins of the godly are either *sins of ignorance, incogitancy, suddain surreption, and daily incurfion*; if they sin *deliberately*, there is not such a *spight and rage*, as there is to be found in the sins of the wicked.

Observat. 6. From the next clause [*and their hard speeches*] Observe, Not only the deeds of ungodly men, but their speeches are brought into judgement; words do not perish with the breath with which they are uttered; no, they remain upon record, and we are to give an account of them at the last day, *Mat. 15. 36. and James 2. 12.* Men are more serious in their actions, but in their speeches rash and inconsiderate; and those that dare not *act evil*, dare yet *speak*; Oh consider, if Christ did only call us to an account for *our actions*, and *our words* were free, 'twere another matter; but he reckoneth with us about our speeches, therefore *so speak*, and *so do*, as those that would be judged by the Law of liberty.

Once more, from thence observe, *That of all speeches, mens hard speeches shall be produced at the day of judgement*: Now what are these hard speeches? I Answer: either such as have *anger* in them, as *Solomon* speaketh of the *froward mouth* and *perverse lips*, *Prov. 4. 22.* when men breathe nothing but fire, and drop coals instead of words; or such as have *pride* in them, or *contempt* of others, as when we lessen their abilities, *insult* over their miseries: *They speak to the grief of those whom thou hast wounded*, see *Psal. 94. 4.* or triumph over their slips and failings: this is to pour salt and vinegar into new wounds.

Again, such as have *bitterness* and *malice* in them, as calumnies and reproaches, *Psal. 64. 3, 4. They bend their bows to shoot their*

their arrows, even bitter words; By whisperings and clancular suggestions they wound the credit of Gods servants, and so bring them into disesteem with others. Well then, be not hasty to utter hard speeches, especially against Gods children, *Numb. 12.8. Were ye not afraid to speak against my servant, against Moses?* The repetition of these hard speeches will be sad notes to your ears at the last day.

The next Note is, *That of all hard speeches those are the worst* *Observat. 8.* which do most directly reflect upon the honour and glory of Christ; for so 'tis in the Text [*hard speeches spoken against him,*] Now hard speeches against Christ are either *blasphemies* against either of his natures; the Ebionites denied him to be God; the *Valentinians* made him a phantastical man, or a man only in appearance; or *murmurings* against his providence and regiment of the world: *Your words have been stout against me, Mal. 3. 15.* When we tax and accuse providence, as if the Lord were blind, careless, unjust or injurious in his dealings: *The Lord shall not see, he shall neither do good nor evil, how should the most high know?* or when we scoff at his word, as these, *Jer. 23. 33. The burden of the Lord, the burden of the Lord, every mans word shall be his burden,* because the Prophets usually began their Sermons with this Preface, *The burden of the Lord,* they scoffingly were wont to say, what burden have you for us to day? Now, saith the Prophet, this shall return into your bosoms, *your words shall be your burden:* So also when we speak against his ways, calling zeal fury, strictness a foolish preciseness, and godliness puritanism: Oh Christians, these hard speeches will cost dear, here or hereafter; * 'tis possible * *Math. 12. 31.* that blasphemy repented of may be forgiven; but when you are brought home to Christ, 'twill cost you bitter pangs, and a sound remorse.

VERSE XVI.

These are murmurers, complainers, walking after their own lusts, and their mouth speaketh great swelling words, having men persons in admiration, because of advantage.

Here the Apostle cometh to make Application, and to prove that these were such as *Enoch* had described; and therefore liable to the judgement threatned: Here are several things charged; I shall take them in order.

The first thing is, their unsatisfiednesse with their present condition, expressed in two words. 1. *Murmurers*: 2. *Complainers*.

The first word, *μυρμουροί*, signifieth such a *muttering* as men use when they are under a passion and discontent: The other word, *καταλιποῖς*, signifieth *blamers of their lot and portion*; namely, of that portion which is set out for them by God; the one implieth their discontented thoughts, the other their querulous expressions. Note hence.

Observ. 1.

That *murmuring is a great sin*; 'Tis so charged here upon the Seducers. I shall first shew what *murmuring* is: Secondly, prove that 'tis a great sin.

1. What it is: * one saith well, it must needs be known because 'tis so commonly practised; but if you will have me describe it, I shall say 'tis *the scum of discontent*, or the vent of *impatience*, or such bold expostulations and complaints as flow from an ulcerated mind: In the Text, you see, first men *mutter*, and then *complain*; the heart boileth with impatience, and then the froth is cast out in *passionate speeches and complaints*: *humble complaints* are not *murmurings*, else there would be no room for prayer; but *bold expostulations* are *murmurings*, when we complain rather of *God* than *to God*, taxing the administration of his providence, as if he dealt too hardly with us; so that in effect *murmuring* is an *anti-providence*, first cherished by *repining thoughts*, and then vented and uttered in *bold and uncomely speeches*; thoughts are audible with God; but 'tis worse when thoughts are not controlled, but break out openly in words tending

ding to Gods dishonour ; if the fire be kindled in our bosomes, 'tis some kind of victory if we smother it, and will not let the sparks fly abroad.

There are several kinds of murmuring ; either *against men*, or *against God*, though in the issue all be *against God*, *against God about men*.

1. *Against men* ; and so either *against our equals*, or *superiors*.

1. *Equals*, when we murmur because they are admitted to the same privileges with our selves, see *Mat. 20. 11.* *They murmured against the good man of the house, saying, these last have wrought but one hour ;* so *Luke 15.* *This thy son hath devoured his living with harlots, &c.* and *Bezabab*, of some that reproached him with the sins of his unregenerate condition : *Hi homines invident mihi gratiam divinam*, surely these men are angry because God hath shewed me mercy : there is an envious nature in man ; we would all shine alone, and inclose the *Common Salvation* ; to upbraid men with late conversion is all one as to make it a crime, because they are born but yesterday, 'tis to rake up that filth which God would have covered.

2. *Against Superiours*, especially because invested with *Magistracy* or *Ministry* : some men are of a yokelesse libertine spirit, will acknowledge no other Law but their own lusts, as in the Text : *Murmurers, walking after their own lusts*, think Magistracy to be an inchoachment upon their freedom, and therefore cannot away with any established order ; and as for *Ministry*, *that all the Lords people are holy*, *Numb. 16. 3.* what need any to set be apart for that work ; thus would they level all things in Church and Common-wealth, as those Rebels rose up against *Moses* and *Aaron* : but though not against the *Office*, we may murmur at the *persons* that are advanced, as if we would teach God how to govern the world, and whom to lift up and cast down : or else by finding fault with their government without a cause ; some presumptuous persons that never learned obedience are always unfatisfied ; 'twas observed of *Egypt*, that it was *Loquax & ingeniosa in contumeliam præfectorum provincia, si quis forte vitaverit culpam, contumeliam non effugit*, many such ungoverned spirits there are that are always traducing publick government, especially when 'tis most faithfully manag'd, and to the discouragement of *Opinionists* and *evil-doers* ; God will not suffer this evil to go unpunished,

punished, *Exod. 16. 8. and 1 Sam. 18. 7.* the calling is his Ordinance, the persons are designed by his providence, and the work concerneth his glory, and therefore God taketh himself to be much interested in the quarrel.

2. There is a murmuring which is immediately against God himself: Since the fall man is always quarrelling with his Maker, either against his Decrees, or his Laws, or his Providence.

1. Against his Decrees; proud man cannot endure to hear of Gods absolute Sovereignty; we will do what we will, but we will not give leave to God to do what he will: The good man of the house was fain to plead his right, *Mat. 20. 15. Shall I not do with my own?*&c. We can see no reason why God should pass by one, and chuse another; though we can see no reason, 'tis enough 'tis Gods pleasure, *Mat. 11. 26.* God hath his *arcana imperii*, as well as earthly Princes, and we have cause to admire what we cannot understand; things may be just, though his reasons appear not to us; God is not bound to give us an account, or to tell us all his secrets; humane reason groweth giddy by prying into the depth of Gods Decrees; 'tis good to change disputes into wonder and reverence, *Rom. 9. 10. Who art thou, O man, that disputest with God?* We may chop Logick one with another, the potshards of the earth with the potshards of the earth; but Gods prerogative is above the tribunal of our Reason.

* *Rom. 8.*

2. His Laws; a proud creature cannot endure to hear of restraints; we could love other things in God, but not his legislative power; * the carnal mind will never stoop, but complaineth of him as harsh and severe, as if he had forbidden us the satisfying of those desires which he hath planted in us: the Israelites murmured thus; the Land was a good Land, but there were Giants and Sons of Anak; *Numb. 13. 32.* the Heaven promised is a good heaven, but the way is rough and unpassable; duties are difficult, and 'tis cumbersome to thwart our lusts; the project of carnal nature is to find out an easie and smooth path to eternal happiness, see *Psal. 106. 24, 25. They despised the pleasant land, they believed not his word, but murmured in their Tents.* Heaven, figured by the Land of Canaan, is not counted worth the pains and difficulty of getting thither.

3. His Providence in general when the wicked prosper; 'tis a temptation that hath shaken the tallest Cedars in Lebanon; David,

vid, though afterwards he was ashamed of it, and count it brutish ignorance, *Plal.* 73. 22. so *Jer.* 12. 1, 2, 3. and *Habakuk*, cap. 1. But let us come to remissions that are of a more particular and private experience: We murmur either for what we want, or for what we have lost, or for what we offend.

First, For what we want: as soon as we are streightened we complain presently; this is not so bad as when we murmur out of wantonness: The Israelites (I observe) did fall a murmuring either out of want, and then they were spared, as for want of waters, *Exod.* 5. 14. for want of meat, *Exod.* 16. 2. want of bread, *Numb.* 20. 3. but at other times out of wantonness; they loathed *Manna*, and must have Quails; but then some special judgment or other brake out upon them: but however 'tis bad enough when our necessities extort these complaints from us; want is a time of praying, not of murmuring; the Throne of Grace was erected for a time of need, *Heb.* 4. 16. but 'tis mans usual custome to change duties into sins, as admonition into censuring; instead of speaking to men, we speak of men; so instead of complaining to God, we complain of God, and so make murmuring take the room of prayer. Necessity is a time to put the Promises in suit, to try faith, to awaken affections, not to provoke murmurings; *I was dumb, and opened not my mouth*, saith *David*, *Plal.* 39. We may open our mouths in confessions of sin, humble narratives, pleading of promises, but not in self-justifications, storming against Providence, or words of unbelieve and impatience, so we must be dumb, and not once open our mouths.

Secondly, For what we have lost: We complain when God taketh away such a child, or such a comfort, or blasteth such a confidence of ours as our affections were much set upon, and in bitterness of heart speak unworthily of God and his dispensations, see *2 Sam.* 18. 33. we hate going back a degree or two, and count it miserable to be once happy, &c. but oh Christians remember, when any thing is lost, 'tis a wonder all is not gone; *Job* lost all, and yet blessed God, *Job.* 1. 23. * *abstulit, sed & dedit*, He * *Seneca*. took, but he gave first: That we were once happy, sheweth we have not always been miserable; our pilgrimage might have been wholly evil and uncomfortable; shall we receive good and not evil at the hands of the Lord? *Job* 2. there is much gone, but somewhat left, and that little that is left is more than we have deserved;

deserved; many in the world would be glad of our Relicks; hath he taken ought from us? he might have taken more; he taketh part, that giveth all; all is his own, he reserved the property to himself; as much right as we had to our comforts was long since forfeited: If God hath lent us blessings, and demands them again, shall we grudge them to the *right owner*? 'tis needful now and then that God should take our comforts from us; when we have gotten a carnal pillow under our heads, we are apt to fall into a deep sleep, and dream many a fond dream, till God take it from under us; he withdraweth comforts to see how we will take it, and bear up upon our great and everlasting hopes, *Heb. 10. 33. Ye took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, &c.* You will say, that was by Martyrdome, but your loss by an ordinary providence; and will not you let God take as willingly as thieves and persecutors? you have the same encouragements, *a better and enduring substance.*

Thirdly, For what we *affect*: We are wont to murmur at the smallness of our portion; we have not so much as others, our condition in the world is not so great, so rich, so honourable as theirs; we have but a single, but they a double, a *Benjamins* portion: Oh but consider, this is meer murmuring; God never undertook to maintain all his children at the same rate, and we cannot expect so much; variety of conditions is necessary for the preservation of the world; levelling is not Gods dispensation; some must be high, and some low; the wise preserver of all things distributeth his gifts variously, *wealth* to one, *skill* to another, *strength* to a third; one must *reign*, another *serve*, and all for the common good; a piece of *Arras* is composed of several parcels; we should all furnish for company, if all were of one sort, who should endure the handy labours? how low soever thou art, thou art there where God hath set thee, and there thou must tarry till the fair invitation of providence call thee higher: Look backward, thou hast made some increase; *Jacob* took notice that his was become *two droves*, *Gen. 32. 10.* though when he first came into the Country he had nothing but *his staff* in his hand: many of Gods children are not so high as thou art; if you murmur, what should others do that have less? We cast our eyes forward on those before us, and because we have not so much as they, so good trading, houses so well furnished, such honour and esteem

esteem in the world, all is as nothing; ah, you do not look about you to the thousands that come short of you; you say, Why should not we thrive as they? be preferred as they? *Joseph* knew why *Benjamin* had a larger mess, though the rest at the Table did not; so doth the Lord know why he giveth to one, and not to another.

Secondly, Let me shew you the *hainousness of the sin*, 1. By the causes of it. 2. By the *injustice* of it.

1. The causes of murmuring are many, but all naught, as,

1. *Pride and Self-love*. When men are conceited of themselves, they storn that others are preferred before them; a proud man must needs be discontented, because he sets a high price upon himself, and when others will not come up to his price he is troubled; you will find such a proud thought rising in your heart, that men of your worth are not taken notice of; and yet they that deserve least complain and murmur most: the best say, *I am not worthy*; real worth is humble; the loaden boughs hang their heads; the Nettle mounteth, when the Violet lieth throwed under its leaves, and is only found by its own scent. All Gods blessings are low to him that is high in his own eyes.

2. *Impatience*. We cannot endure the least inconvenience; touchy nature would be at ease, tumbling and wallowing in all kind of pleasure; therefore as soon as we are touched in our skins we fall a murmuring, *Why is this evil befallen me?* and *Why should I wait upon the Lord any longer?* An unsubjected Will to God will inevitably put us upon repining.

3. *Presumption of merit*. Where all is of free-cost there is no complaining. Men ascribe to themselves, when they prescribe to God what he shall do for them, or how bless them; every thing is welcom where nothing is deserved: if you keep a man of Alms, you take it ill that he should not be pleased with his diet: when we look to desert, we may wonder more at what we have, than what we want; God would do us no wrong if we were reduced to a less pittance; if in a prison, 'tis a favour we are not in bill: A malefactor would be glad to commute his punishment, a greater for a less, death for exile, exile for loss of estate, and then the whole for a part. Can a firebrand of hell murmur? there is our desert; but we think God is bound, and that 'tis a wrong that he taketh no more notice of us, *Wherefore have we*

H h h

fasted,

* *Quol enixæ
concupiscunt ut
sit, contabescunt
quod esse non
possit.* Gilbert
in can. 19.

sated, &c. Isa. 58. I am not as other men, &c. Luke 18.

4. *Carnal affection.* * We are too ravenous and greedy upon outward things, and therefore the disappointment breedeth the more vexation; our desires and hopes of more, destroy the memory and consideration of what we have: God giveth sufficiently to satisfy our necessities, and we seek to supply our *lusts*. *Lust* is more given to murmuring than necessity: Nature is contented with a little, 'tis soon satisfied; but lust enlargeth the desire as hell.

5. *Unbelief and Distrust*, Psal. 106. 24, 25. *They believed not his word, but murmured in their Tents*: Men quarrel with Gods providence, because they do not believe his promises; *distrust* will be sure to breed discontent; 'tis ill for the present, and they cannot see how it will be better; they could not believe that the *wilderness* was the way to *Canaan*; that God can love one whom he corrects; and therefore as soon as they feel the smart of the rod, they give vent to their passions.

Secondly, *The injustice* of it; 'tis injurious to God, to others, to our selves.

1. 'Tis injurious to God: murmuring is a sin that pulleth God out of the Throne; *you enter into judgment with him*; as *David* on the other hand prayeth, *Enter not into judgment with thy servant, O Lord.* Murmurers either deny his providence, or tax it: Implicitely they deny it, as if God did not set out to every man his portion; if men did believe that God did govern the world, even as he made the world, why do they not complain of creation as well as providence? We would laugh at him that would murmur because God did not make him an *Angel*, or a *Star*; why is it not as ridiculous to murmur because God hath made thee a *subject*, and not a *Prince*? a *beggar*, and not a *rich man*? a *servant*, but not a *master*? but that they own the hand of God in one, and not in the other, as if the world were governed by blind chance. Or else they tax providence of *indiscretion* or *unrighteousness*: 'Tis marvellous to see how murmuring robbereth God of all his attributes; it clippeth his *Sovereignty*; we will not let him do with his own as it pleaseth him; the greatest contest between him and us, is, whose will shall stand, his, or ours; it limits his power, and sleights it; when God doth not satisfy us, we think he cannot, Psal. 78. 20. We set him a task, and if God

God perform it not, we question his sufficiency; 'tis a contention with our Maker, an entering into the Lifts with God, as if we could make our party good against him, *Psal.* 78. 17. We tax his wisdom, Men will be teaching God how to govern the world; for we prescribe to him, as if he did not understand what is fit for us; he pleaseth us not in his wisest dispensations, and we bear it out, as if we could mend his works, *Job* 21. 22. *Shall any teach God knowledge, seeing he judgeth those that are high: They that disallow of Gods proceedings, take upon them to be Gods Teachers: 'Twas a blasphemous speech of Alphonsus, Si Deo à consiliis adjuisset in creatione Mundi, multa se consilium ordinaturum. If he had been of Gods Council when he made the world, he would have ordered many things better. Many abhor the blasphemy, and yet think almost to the same effect; if they had the governing of the world, such men should not prosper, and such and such things should not be done: thus do we * darken counsel, with words without knowledg, and cast a reproach of folly and injustice upon Gods providence. Again, to his goodness we are injurious, by disvaluing what we have, in comparison of what we expect, *Mal.* 1. 2. *Wherein hast thou loved us? As if they had nothing, because not fully what they expected: 'Tis mans nature to forget what is granted, and pitch only upon what is denyed; as children in a pet, throw away what they have, if you do not give them more; saith Haman, All this availeth me nothing, Esther* 5. 13. and the whole Kingdom of Israel would not content *Ahab*, when he falleth sick for *Naboth's* Vineyard, *1 Kings* 21. 4. As in the body, if one humour be out of order, or one joynt broken, the soundness of all the rest availeth nothing; a little is enough to set the creature a complaining. His Justice also we tax, as if he did defraud us of our due; we think somewhat is due, or else why do we complain? *Matt.* 20. 13. *Friend, I do thee no wrong, &c.**

2. 'Tis injurious to others; it puts us upon acts of violence and sedition; the murmurers are called rebels, *Numb.* 17. 10. Schism in the Church, and sedition in the Common-wealth, are but the fruits of murmuring; men do not like their own rank and station, and then murmur, and then perturb all; *Oh that I were a Judge*, saith *Absalom*, and afterwards breaketh out into open rebellion; *thin exhalations end in great storms; servants would*

be masters, and the poor would be rich, and subjects would be in office and power; and by giving vent to their repining thoughts, inflame the zeal of persons like minded with themselves, till all be embroyled in blood and confusions.

3. 'Tis injurious to *our selves*, man is a foolish creature, what doth he get by complaining of God? Who shall right us? Before what Tribunal will you put him in suit? Of all sins murmuring is most *unreasonable*, but very *pernicious*; what do we get by it but *disquiet* and *judgement*? 'Tis like spitting against the wind, the drivel is returned upon our own heads; disquiet it breedeth us; a *murmuring spirit is a greater evil then any affliction*, like a sour vessel, it turneth all things that are put into it into sowerneffe; most mens misery ariseth from their discontent; if *their heart and their condition* were suited, they would do well enough in the world, we trouble our own peace; if we could learn to frame our minds to our estates, as the skilful Musician letteth down the strings a peg lower when the tune requireth it, we should passe to Heaven more comfortably. Again, it bringeth down judgement; expressions tending to Gods dishonour have a loud cry in his ears: *Miriam* was smitten with a leprosie for murmuring, and *Dathan* and *Abiram* swallowed up alive; fiery serpents, and plagues, and exclusion out of *Canaan*, were *Israels* judgements when they were sick of the fret: 1 Cor. 10. 10. *Neither murmur ye, as some of them murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer.*

Let us now make Application, *Beware of murmurings*, 'tis a greater sin then the world taketh it to be; here I shall speak of two things. 1. Murmuring at the *Times* and *publick changes* which have hapned amongst us. 2. Murmuring in our *own private Case*.

1. Murmuring at the *Times*, 'tis a *repining age* we live in, many factions are disappointed, and therefore the most are full of discontent, forgetting that all this is the work of a wise God: Mistake me not, I list not to become the *Times Advocate*; it little becometh us to be Patrons of publick miscarriages, or Factors for any Private Interest.

Therefore let me proceed with the greatest Scripture evidence and conviction, and state what is murmuring at the *Times*: 'Tis forbidden, *Eccles. 7. 10. Say not thou that the former times were better*

better then these; for thou dost not inquire, wisely concerning this: Now what is the sin taxed in this Scripture? I answer.

1. Not *godly sorrow*, and complaining to God, and bewailing the corruptions of the times: No, the *Mourners in Sion* are marked for preservation, *Ezek. 9.* None are better friends to publick Interest; 'twere well if these *Doves of the Vallies* had more company; this is no sin, for this is the only way of *entering our protest*, and being free from the corruptions of the age; God hath bound up all *Politique Bodies* in the same bundle, and we are concerned in others sin: 'tis the art of divine mercy by this means to prevent publick ruine, by interestting his people in the welfare of those places where they live, that every man in this place may be sensible of present sins, and approaching judgements, *two dry sticks will set a green one a fire*; Can you blame the Children of God then if they mourn, and enter their protest against the iniquity of the Times? The *Corinthians* were not clear of the incest committed amongst them, till they had mourned, then the Apostle saith, *now ye are clear in this matter*: 2 Cor. 7. 11. surely they that are involved in the guilt concerned in the judgement, had need mourn.

2. Not *zeal in publick reproof*, *Isa. 58. 1* Cry aloud, spare not, &c. *vitium seculi* is no excuse; if we spare, God will not spare, if we hazard our bodies in bearing our testimony, we save our souls: we must crie out upon sin with a full throat, and that again and again, provided we be clear in our Principles and Aymes, and do it without clamour, and popular Investives: When a fire is kindled in a City, we do not say coldly, yonder is a great fire, I pray God it do no harme: in times of publick defection, we are not to read *tame Lectures of Contemplative Divinity*, or fight with Ghosts, and antiquated Errours, but to oppose with all earnestnesse the growing evils of the world, what ever it cost us.

3. Nor yet *an holy dislike and singularity*, standing aloof from publick corruptions, as *Lot in Sodom*; and *Noah walked with God in his generations*, *Gen. 6. 9.* Gods children most commonly are forced to walk in a counter motion to the times. *Paul* when he had accused the times as evil, adviseth Christians to *walk circumspectly*, *Gal. 5. 16.* Wordly wisdom would draw quite another conclusion. *The times are bad, let us do as well as we can; theres no living in the world, unlesse we yield a little; the Oak is*

rent

rent to peices with the fury of the wind, when the Willow boweth and bendeth; shall we alone resist such a torrent? Thus would we reason; but the spirit doth not loosen the reins; but streighten them upon this consideration, *the dayes are evill, therefore be circumspect*, that is, be carefull to keep close to rule, lest you be blinded and perverted by the subtleties of those that lie in wait to deceive; and elsewhere, *shine as lights in the midst of a perverse generation*: Dead fishes swim with the stream, there is a difference between *subjection to God*, and *compliance with men*, &c.

But now positively, What is the fault there reproved? I Answer, 1. *Foolish murmurings*, or such a fond and unthankful admiration of former times, that we have not a good word for the present; Tacitus observed it, *vitio malignitatis humane vetera laudantur, presentia fastidio sunt*; 'tis a common evil, men are praising past times, and declaiming against the present; querulous natures are never pleased, neither full nor fasting; past temptations are forgotten, and therefore *present evils* seem worst, and *laziness* many times occasioneth complaints: Many repine against God because he hath given us our lot in such an age, where in publick contests put us upon the trouble of prayer, discourse, and diligent searching in the mind of God; now usually to excuse other duties, we fall a complaining.

Again, *private discontent* may exasperate some, things are not suitable to their humours and interests; no wonder if Demetrius and the Copper-Smiths call those evil times when the Gospel is like to get up, because their craft is lik to go down and they are not favoured as they do desire: Again, *foolish carnality* may be in the wind, carnal men will extol the happinesse of former times; their *great hospitality* and *kind Neighbourhood*, their *best dealing*, and *good devotion*; what a merry time it was, and how plentiful all things were before the new Gospel came in, and they had nothing but *Misses* and *Mattens*, as those sorts, Jer. 44. 18, 19. Formalists cry up the goodnesse of the old Religion to disparage times of Reformation: so the Pagans said that the Roman Empire thrived more under false gods, then under the Christian Religion; wherefore Augustine wrote his Books, *De civitate Dei*, to answer that charge; Christians these times may be the worse for those that went before, we may smart for their bloud and Idols, and hatred of the people of God; judgements were

were then in the *causes*, as the clouds gather before the rain falleth.

2. When we pass over the good, and look only upon the evil; we should counter-balance our *afflictions* with our mercies; *Shall we receive good and not evil at the hands of God, Job 2.* 'tis railing to gather up the *failings* of others, and not to take notice of their *graces*; so 'tis a railing against providence, and an ill office to be only like flies pitching upon a *sore place*: is there no blessing with all this bad? with our *temporal calamities* have we not some increase of *spiritual privileges*? as in the wilderness they had Gods presence, though they had a tedious passage of it; the *free use of Ordinances* will countervail all *publique burdens*; some suppose that Solomon in that *Ecl. 7. 10.* alludeth to the peoples murmuring in his time, there was a *Temple building*, but the Taxes were great; and therefore they cryed *the former times were better then these*, see 1 Kings 12. 4.

5. When we charge our guilt upon the times, man is apt to transfer his faults upon others, and obliquely upon God himself, *The woman which thou gavest me, &c.* and so usually *the times wherein we live are such, &c.* why? God ordered them, and if you were as you should be, the times could not hurt you; a great deal of fire falleth upon a stone and it burneth not, but a dry chippoon taketh fire; men think, if they be corrupt, the fault is not theirs but the times; 'tis yours certainly, 'tis *bad men make bad times*, as I shall shew anon.

Let me now give you a few Remedies.

1. When your hearts storm, look back, there were *inconveniences* in the wilderness, but a sore bondage in Egypt; a good memory is an help to thankfulness; for my own case, when I am brimful, I consider the times that are past, when there was no peace to him that went out or came in: surely they that are so ready to return into Egypt. have forgotten their bondage; when their cry came up to God because of the anguish of their souls; things that are *out of feeling*, are out of remembrance: one great defect the people of God are troubled withall, is a *bad memory*, Mich. 6. 5. *Oh my people remember, &c.* I tell you, if we did but remember how we were distressed heretofore, we would not murmur, but give thanks.

2. *There is nothing new under the Sun, Eccles. 1. 7.* We say, *Is there*

See 2 Chron.
15. from 3. to
the 6.

there any sorrow like unto my sorrow? Things never were as they are now; certainly you do not rightly inquire after this matter; the world is the world still; men have ever had the same principles, the same *corruptions*, the same *temptations*; there were *Donatists* then, as well as *Seperatists* now; *Pelagians* then, as well as *Arminians* now; *Arrians* then, as well as *Socinians* now; all *new lights* are but old darkness revived, neither *new*, nor *lights*; 'tis easie to parallel what is most odious; there is a circular motion of *opinions* and *fashions*, as the Sun returneth every year to the same points of his compass.

3. All cometh to pass by Gods providence, he is the great Master of the Scenes, that presents the world with a new Stage, both of Acts and Actors, 1 Sam. 2. 7, 8. The Lord maketh poor, and maketh rich; he bringeth low, and he lifteth up; he raiseth up the poor from the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among the Princes, and make them inherit the Crown of glory; for the pillars of the earth are the Lords, and he hath set the world upon them: The government of the world is in Gods hands, and he casteth down some, and raiseth up others from beggary to Sovereignty, from the dunghil to glory: you see there his course is contrary to levelling, he will have some upon the Throne of glory: you see again, that God hath an hand in all the mutations and changes that fall out in the world; and that these mutations are frequent; the world is tossed to and fro, like a ball, from hand to hand, that Gods Sovereignty and Dominion over events may the better appear, and that power may not want a bridle, nor the low condition, a comfort: again, that all the Kings of the earth do hold their estates of God; say then, If God hath set up these persons, let me see what God will do with them.

4. The good of times is not to be measured by the carnal quiet of them. Physick provoketh ill humours, better they should be stirred than lye still and foment a disease: God usually cometh with a Fan and a Sword; we should not murmur against the Sword, because of the benefit of the Fan.

5. If every one did amend himself, the times would soon amend. Mend thy self, and as many as are under thy charge, and mourn for others, and thou hast no cause to complain, *Joshua* 24. 15. I and my house will serve the Lord: if every one did sweep before his

his own door, the common filth would be sooner carried away: usually complainers do least; as the crafty *Lapwing* will go up and down fluttering and crying, to draw the Fowler from her own nest; we have some secret nest of our own, and we are loath it should be rifled and exposed to publick view.

6. *The worse the times are, the more exercise for grace*; we have more opportunities of shewing love to God then formerly, and zeal for his interests, and industry in finding out the right way; man is never contented, sometimes we question Gods love if we meet with no opposition, and yet we complain when the ways of God are opposed.

7. There is an *Antiperistasis* in grace as well as nature; you should be better in bad times: as fountain water is hottest in winter, and fire scaldeth most in frosty weather, or stars shine brightest in the darkest night, see *Phil.* 2. 15. when the air is infectious, we are the more careful of our diet.

8. *Complaining will not excuse duty*, it argueth little faith; is not Christ King? doth not he reign? little obedience, and care of reformation; a gracious heart is most apt to return upon its self; if the times be bad, what have I done to make them better? if not, thou art one that hast made them worse.

9. He that is not good in bad times, will be naught in better, *Isa.* 26. 10. *In the land of uprightness will he deal unjustly*; a sick man thinketh to have ease in another bed in another room, carry him thither his pain continueth; if a carnal man had lived in the Prophets times, or the Apostles time, he would be the same as now, see *Mat.* 23. 29, 30. A bryar is a bryar where ever it groweth, change of times will not do the work without a change of heart: *Adam* sinned in Paradise, the Apostate Angels in heaven; *Lot* was unchaste in the Mountains, where were none but his own family; in an howling Wilderness where they had no outward enticements, the Israelites were given to fleshly lusts.

2. The next Part of Use is to rebuke murmuring in our own private case; by way of consideration take these helps.

1. *A little is enough, too much is a snare*, *Luke* 12. 15. *Mans life consisteth not in the abundance of what he possesseth*; the wants of nature are very few, till lust make it ravenous, a garment too long will soon prove a dirty rag; the greater gates open to

*Qui Christum
curas non mul-
tum curas quam
de praeiis ci-
vilibus sterem con-
ficiat. Hieron.*

the greater temptations and cares; 'tis an hard lesson to *learn to abound*, Phil. 4. 12. we say, such an one would do well to be a Lord or a Lady, 'tis an harder thing than you think it to be; a little sufficeth to keep us till we come to Heaven; if we have cloaths for *warmth*, though not for *pomp*, 'tis enough, what need a Christian care how finely dust and ashes be wrapped up, or of what stuff his excrements be made.

2. God hath an hand in all things, Psal. 39. 9. Isa. 38. 15. God is the Party with whom we have to do in sickness, or any other trouble, every wheel moveth according to the motion of the first; when we see the hand of God, 'tis a piece of religious manners to keep silence.

3. God seeth what is fittest for us, if a man should be left to carve out his own portion, he would be his own greatest enemy; none hath more love than God, more wisdom, and justice, then God; therefore count the present estate best, because 'tis of his chusing; should the Shepherd chuse the pastures, or the sheep? we are all for the delicacies of pleasure and prosperity; children think green fruit the best diet because it suiteth with their appetite; what a strange creature would man be if he were what he would be himself? well then, let us leave it to God to chuse our portion, and to appoint us what part we shall act in the world; usually we set up a court in our own affections, and enact Laws; prescribe to providence, we would have this and we would have that; and when our expectations are not answered, we fall a murmuring, 'tis very hard to repeal the decrees of our own will; therefore 'tis good resign our selves to the disposal of providence, as David doth, 2 Sam. 15. 26, 27. and to keep our desires low, till Gods will be declared; 'tis easier to add then to subtract, and to ascend with providence, when the master of the feast biddeth us to sit higher, then to be compelled to descend and lye in the dust.

4. If it be bad, it might have been worse, in regard of Gods absolute power and our desert; your sufferings are not so great as your sins, Ezra 9. 13. Thou hast punished us less then we have deserved, God is too just to do us wrong; if he will exchange Hell for Babylon. There is much of mercy in it, nothing of injustice; if you do not deserve this usage from the hands of men, you have deserved this, and much more from God; 'tis deserved of God,

God; and therefore to be born *patiently*, 'tis not deserved of men, therefore to be born *cheerfully*; whose cross would we bear, *Christ* or the *Theeves Cross*? when we suffer deserved y and as Malefactors, we bear the *Theeves Cross*.

5. *The Lord disposeth all for the benefit of his own people*, so that if it be not good for the present, it will turn to good, *Rom. 8. 28.* if God should not thus exercise us, we would have more cause to complain; he is too gentle a Physician that lets his Patient dye for want of putting him to the trouble of physick; consult with *Gods aim*, rather than your *present feeling*; let him cut and burn here, that he may save hereafter, *Domine hic ure, hic secca, &c.*

6. *Murmuring is so bad in none as in Gods children*, it doth not become their *priviledges*, their *vows*, their *hopes*; God, in covenant, is theirs, and he hath all things that hath him that made all things; all things are comprised in God; if our *lumber* be changed into *silver*, our *silver* into *gold*, our *gold* into *one rare Pearl*, that's all the other virtually; if God hath given us himself, his *Christ*, his *Spirit*, will not all this content us? It doth not become *our vows*, and *the promises* which thou mad'st to God when thy *terrors* were upon thee; then thou didst say, Oh Lord, let me have *Jesus Christ*, and I will be content, though I should beg my bread, and be reduced to ragges and extremity of want; when thy heart was stung with sin, thus desirous wert thou to reckon upon *Christ* as thy all-sufficient portion; how grew the *consolations of God* to be *small with thee*; now God tryeth whether thou wilt stand to thy word, and thou fallest a murmuring; it may be just with God to dip his Arrows in venom and vengeance, and shoot them into thy soul again: Once more, 'tis below *your hopes*, you should have a spirit as high as Heaven, and will you storm at every petty loss; as he said, *Art thou the Kings son in law, and art so lean from day to day?* are you heirs of glory, and stand so much upon trifles? it should not be.

Having given you some general Considerations against murmuring; I now come to particular Cases.

1. Dost thou lye under deep pressing wants? divers have been put to great straights, that have done God more glory: *Musc ulus* a great Divine, yet forced to serve a Weaver for his subsistence: *Paul made Tents*, that he might not be burdensome,

and so prejudice men against the Gospel; the more destitute, the more sensible of the care of providence; God beareth the Purse for us; when we have but from hand to mouth, we are still supplied; the more immediately you live upon God, the more you begin the life of Heaven, where God is all in all: Deep poverty is the sauce of the present life; *Austin* saw a beggar frisking after his belly was filled, he could find no such delight after the use of the creatures, being daily and abundantly supplied; the spectacle much wrought upon him.

2. Hast thou sustained great losses? If God hath lent us blessings, and taken them again, shall we grudge them to the right owner? he took part that gave all.

3. Dost thou endure great pains? there is a gradation in miseries; those that light upon the estate do not sit so close as those that light up on the body, and those that light upon the body are not so terrible as those that light upon the soul; *a wounded spirit who can bear?* bodily pains is the case we now speak to; you are full of pains, but Christ on the Cross suffered more; but he was God-man; the *Martyrs* suffered more, *Heb. 11. 35.* they were tortured, *ιτυμναρίσθων*, they were stretched out like a Drum; but those were rare instances, and had a singular assistance; *Pauls* was an ordinary case, his thorn in the flesh, *2 Cor. 12.* was some great bodily pain; but *Paul* was a choice spirit, Heathens have born it stoutly; *Epicurus* was full of solace in a fit of the Cholick, *ob memoriam inventorum*, by calling to mind his inventions in Philosophy; and *Tully* speaketh of *Possidonius* the Philosopher, that whilst he was under a great fit of the stone, could discourse freely that *nothing was good but virtue; nothing evil but vice*, and when his pain twinged him, would say, *Nil agis dolor quamvis sis molestus, nunquam confitebor te esse malum*; Pain thou dost nothing alter my opinion, though thou art troublesome, yet thou art not evil; but these were men that obstinately maintained an insensibleness: little children have endured great pains, and wilt thou startle at that which poor little children have suffered? Besides all this, 'tis Gods design to try you; there is a great deal of valour to be shewed in the sick bed; the end of it will be either life or death; if death, 'tis the last brunt; bear it patiently, those enemies which ye now see ye shall see them no more, Heaven will make amends for all: If life, you will be ashamed

*Virtus etiam
læto exhibetur.*

Exod. 14. 13.

ashamed, when well, that you had no more patience whilst sick ; *passive valour* is the glory of a Christian ; *active valour* that is fomented with plenty of blood and spirits, is a poor thing to it ; great Souldiers that will venture upon the mouth of a Canon, yet tremble at a disease, and lingring death ; when they are sick they are under Gods arrest, &c.

Thus I have given you remedies against murmuring, by way of consideration : Now, by way of practice.

1, Divert the stream another way ; as to the disposition of heart, take this rule ; Be still examining thy self, rather then judging God, *Psal. 4. 4.* If God seemeth to neglect me, have not I neglected him, &c. as to the outward expression of murmuring, turn the streams again ; expresse thy sorrows often in a way of prayer, thy rejoycings in a way of praise : prayer cureth murmuring, for that's a duty wherein we profess *subjection* and *dependence* ; and besides, utterance giveth ease to the soul, an Oven stopped is the more hot within, complain more to God, and we shall not complain of God : Praise cureth murmuring, *Job 1. 23.* as long as we can give thanks, we will not be querulous ; but when we are *disdainful of blessings*, and we say, *what no more ? Mal. 1. 7.* the distemper is getting ground upon the soul.

2. Affect rather to be good then great ; none murmur because of the smallness of grace, that's not their complaint ; but because of the lowliness of their condition in the world : a man that looketh after the increase of grace, he can bless God for his outward decays, *2 Cor. 4. 16.* and look upon murmurings as worse then pains or losses ; those are afflictions, these are sins : So much for the first crime charged.

The next part of their Character is [*walking after their own lusts*,] this is fitly subjoynd to the former ; for *lusts* make men froward, and hard to be pleased ; and the persons here described were exact *Liberines*, making their lusts their rule and their law ; yea, the most brutish of all lusts, the *lusts of the flesh* ; and therefore in *Peter*, 'tis *2 Pet. 2. 10.* *That walk after the flesh*, in the *lust of uncleanness* ; how portentous they were for impurities in this kind, we told you before ; their [*walking after their lusts*] implieth their giving up themselves to such a course, contrary to all fear of God, care of Laws, or restraint of nature.

The Point is, *That 'tis an Argument of ungodliness when men walk*

walk after their own lusts : The Apostle applying the Prophecie of *Enoch* against ungodly men, bringeth this as a part of the charge, that *they walk after their own lusts*. I shall inquire,

1. *What lusts are.*
2. *What 'tis to walk after their own lusts.*
3. *Prove it to be a note of ungodliness.*

1. What lusts are? This I have Answered elsewhere; see my Commentary on *J-mes* 1. 14. pag. 105. and 106. for the present, let it suffice to note, That lust is either *original*, or *actual*.

1. It signifieth our *original proneness* to all that is evil, *Jam.* 1. 14.

2. *Actual* lust : so it signifieth any evil motion of the heart that swerveth from the Law of God; more especially our inordinate desires and inclinations to *pleasures, honours, or profit*; sometimes they are called *fleshy lusts*, 1 *Pet.* 2. 11. as carrying us out to the satisfaction of our bodily and brutish appetites; sometimes *worldly lusts*, *Tit.* 2. 12. because they are stirred by worldly objects; lusts are the *fever* of the soul, unnatural heats, transgressing the Laws of Reason, and bounds of Religion.

2. What doth this walking imply? 'tis elsewhere expressed by *-serving divers lusts and pleasures*, *Tit.* 3. 3. and by *fulfilling the desires of the flesh and the mind*, *Ephes.* 2. 3. It noteth,

First, A *willing subjection* to lust, as a *Law*, or as a *Master*; the one is implied in *walking after our lusts*, the other in *-serving our lusts*, when men do as they please, and let their sensual heart give Law to the whole man : A child of God may be overcome by his lusts, but he doth not walk after them, or serve them; he may be foiled, but he doth not give over the combate, and is still resisting, striving, praying, calling in the help of the Spirit; his soul suffereth a rape by lust, there is not a plenary consent on his part.

2. *Customary practice* and observance: walking is a progressive motion, and so implieth mens course, and the tenour of their lives : A child of God his walking is in the Spirit, *Gal.* 5. 16. and doth not fulfil the lusts of the flesh; but 'tis a wicked mans work and employment.

3. A *fond indulgence* : They are so far from thwarting lusts, that

that they provide, contrive for them, *Rom. 13. 14. Make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof:* they nourish their hearts, fondle lust, and make a wanton of it; they do not crucify it, and set up a course of mortification against it.

Thirdly, This is a *note of unregeneracy, or a state of ungodliness*: the Apostle describeth the natural state by this *servings*, *Tit. 3. 3.* and this *fulfilling*, *Eph. 2. 3.* and when the Holy Ghost doth deride the pride and folly of young men, in giving themselves up *Joh 15. 11.* to a course of lust and vanity, he saith, *go walk in the way of thine own heart, Eccles. 11. 9.* and the negative or privative work of regeneration is called a *putting off the old man, with his deceitful lusts, Eph. 4. 22.* and it standeth with good reason.

1. Because they that walk after their lusts seek to cherish that which Christ came to destroy, and so go about to defeat the Redeemer, and to hinder him from obtaining his purpose in their hearts; Christ came to *destroy the works of the Devil, 1 Joh. 3. 8. Iva dyadwon,* to untie and loosen those cords of vanity wherewith Satan hath bound us; the works of the Devil are lusts, which are of his inspiring and cherishing, *John 8. 44. Ye are of your Father the Devil, and the lusts of your Father ye will do:* Now when Christ cometh to loose these cords, carnal men tie them the faster, and therefore certainly are to be reckoned to the Devil, and not unto God; every degree of service done to Satan is an act of treason and disloyalty to Christ; therefore when men make it their work to fulfil their lust, they renounce all allegiance to Christ.

2. They that walk after their lusts have not taken the *rule of the new creature* upon them; the new man hath another Master, and another rule; the renewed soul is not governed by lust, but by the Law of God, *Gal. 6. 16.* if we have not changed our rule, 'tis a sign we have not changed our Master.

3. They that walk after their lusts never felt the power of grace; for the *grace of God teacheth us to deny all ungodliness and worldly lusts, Tit. 2. 11, 12.* how doth it teach us? 1 Answer, partly by diversion, by acquainting us with better things in Christ, *Rom. 13. 14. Put ye on the Lord Jesus, and make not provision for the lusts of the flesh:* love cannot lie idle in the soul; the mind of man must have some oblectation and delight; either love runneth out in lust, or in respects to God; either to heavenly
or

or worldly things : when we only favour the things of the flesh, 'tis a sign we never tasted how sweet God is in Christ.

2. Partly by way of help and supply ; it planteth opposite principles, and makes use of an opposite power ; it plants opposite principles, a new nature, that hath new desires and delights, 2 Pet. 1. 4. and maketh use of an opposite power, which is the Spirit of God, Rom. 8. 13.

3. Partly by way of argument ; grace out-pleadeth lust, it urgeth the unsuitableness of it to our condition, see Rom. 13. 13. 1 Pet. 4. 3. and 1 Pet. 1. 14. Rom. 6. 2. to our vows ; Baptism implieth a renunciation of sins, 1 Pet. 3. 21. 'tis an answer to Gods demands ; *Credis ? Credo : abrenuncias ? Abrenuncio : spondes ? spondeo.* Therefore he that liveth under the full power of lust hath forgotten his Baptismal vows, 2 Pet. 1. 8. forgotten that he was purged from his old sins : it pleadeth also the unsuitableness of it to our hopes, 1 Pet. 2. 11. we are passing on to another country, where we shall enjoy a pure, and sinless estate.

Let us now apply the point.

Viz. 1.

It dissuadeth us from walking after our own lusts : you that are Christians should deny them, and not gratifie them, otherwise you renounce your allegiance to God : Lust sets up another Lord, and maketh us stand in defiance with the God that made us ; his Laws call for one thing, and your lusts crave another : God saith, *Put off the old man, with his deceitful lusts* ; and you say, We will keep them : Can they be good subjects that live in defiance of their Sovereigns Laws ? If a Prince should send a message to a City, not to harbour such and such Traytors, but to search them out, and bring them to condign punishment ; if they never look after them, yea, are angry with those that discover them, it argueth they do inhaunt with Traytors, and are enemies to their Prince : We are often warned, in Gods Name, to look to our sinful lusts, to put them away, and we go home, and never regard it, nay, are angry with those that grate upon the Conscience : *Herod* would not have his *Herodias* touched ; we take it hainously when the Word beareth hard upon our hearts ; what do we but shew our selves Traytors to the Crown of heaven ?

2. Otherwise you renounce your interest in Christ, Gal. 5. 24. *They that are Christs have crucified the flesh, with the affections and lusts*

lusts thereof: He doth not say, they are Christs that take up this opinion and naked belief, that he was crucified, or died for sinners; but they are Christs, *that feel that he was crucified*, that by the virtue of his Cross do crucify their own lusts and sinful affections; What? a *Christian*, and yet *worldly*! A *Christian*, and yet *sensual*! A *Christian*, and yet *proud*! You that are *given to pleasures*, do you believe in Christ that was a *man of sorrows*? You that are carried after the *pomp and vanity of the world*, do you believe in Christ, *whose kingdom was not of this world*? You that are *proud and lofty*, do you profess an interest in Christ, who said, *Learn of me, for I am humble and lowly*? 'Tis in vain for you to talk of his dying for sinners, and *boasting of his Cross*, when you never felt the virtue of it, *Gal. 6. 14*. What experience have you, that his Cross was the Cross of the Son of God, when your hearts linger as inordinately after carnal things as ever? Have you gotten any thing by it? Do you feel any weakening of lusts? Any decay of sin? Are you planted into the efficacy of his death? *Rom. 6. 5*. If not, how can you glory in the Cross of Christ?

3. *Otherwise you are not acquainted with the Spirit*, his work is to mortify lusts, *Rom. 8. 13*. and they that are after the flesh, do savour of the things of the flesh; and they that are after the Spirit, the things of the Spirit; *Rom. 8. 5*. After whom do ye walk? After your own lusts? Or after the Spirit of God?

4. God doth not only require you in point of Sovereignty, to put away your lusts, but also pleadeth with you upon terms of grace, *Titus 2. 14*. The grace of God that bringeth salvation teacheth you to deny worldly lusts: Grace hath denied us nothing, it hath given us Christ, and all things with him; and shall we stick at our lusts, that are not worth the keeping? Nature is much addicted to these lusts; but surely God loves Christ much more then we love the world; his love is infinite and unlimited, like his essence, yet God gave up the Son of his love; Grace counterth nothing too dear for us, not the blood of Christ, the joy of Heaven, and shall we count any thing too dear to part with for Grace sake? God forbid. A right eye, and a right hand, cannot be so dear to us, as Christ was to God: At what cost hath Grace been at to redeem us, and save us? And shall Grace be at all this cost for nothing? If God had commanded us a

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greater

greater thing, ought we not to have done it ? If to *give the body to be burnt*, to offer the first born for the sin of *thy soul* ? considering his absolute right over the creature, he might have required *thy life*, and *thy childrens life*; but he only requireth *thy lusts*, things not worth the keeping, the bane of the soul, a *bad inmate*; which if we knew its pestilent influence, we needed no more arguments to turn it out of doors; thy lusts God requireth, things we are bound to part with, to preserve the integrity and perfection of our natures, if God had never dealt with us in a way of grace; but now shall grace lead in vain, when it presseth to deny lusts ? it will be the shame and horror of the damned to all eternity, that they have stood with God for a trifle, that they would not part with *dung for gold*, with a little brutish contentment, for the consolations of the Spirit, especially when grace which hath so deeply pre-engaged us pleadeth for it.

5. Consider what lust is; 'tis the *disease of the soul*: Natural desire is like the *Calor vitalis*, the *vital heat*; but lust is like a *feverish heat*, that oppresseth nature; we should get rid of it, as we would of a disease; the satisfaction of it is sweet to a carnal nature, so is drink to a man in a Fever; who would desire a Fever to relish his drink ? Better be without the disease, then enjoy the pleasure of the satisfaction, better mortifie lust, then satisfie it, in the issue 'twill be sweeter: I am sure the *pains of mortification* will not be so bitter as the *horrors of everlasting darkness*: lust let alone beginneth our hell, 'tis a *burning heat*, that at length breaketh out into *everlasting flames*: Again, lust is the *disorder of nature*; as 'tis monstrous in the body, if the *head* be there where the *feet* should be, and the *feet* there where the *head* should be; such a deordination is there in the soul when the affections carry it, and when Reason should be in dominion, we suffer lust to take throne; man rightly constituted, his actions are governed in this manner; the *understanding* and *conscience* prescribe to the *Will*, the *Will* according to *right reason* and *conscience* moveth the *affections*, the *affections* according to the command and counsel of the *will*, move the *bodily spirits* and *members of the body*; but by corruption there is a manifest inversion and change; *pleasures* affect the *senses*, the *senses* corrupt the *fantasie*, the *fantasie* moveth the *bodily spirits*, they the *affections*, and by their

their violence and inclination the Will is enslaved, and the mind blinded; and so man is carried head-long to his own destruction; now, shall we cherish these lusts and brutish appetitions? The Lord forbid.

6. *'Tis lusts that hinder the peace of the world, our own peace: how quietly and happily would men live, if they were more mortified? Men desire more then they have, and so are made poor, not by want, so much as desire; he that expects little, is soon satisfied: 'tis our own passions that raise a storm in the soul: a man that is vile and little in his own eyes, when others condemn and slight him, they do but rarifie his private opinion of himself; and who can be angry with others, because they are of the same judgment with our selves? Take away the lust, and the trouble ceaseth: What need Human be troubled that Mordecai did not bow the knee, but that he looked for it? Nay, lusts trouble our peace of Conscience: Lusts let alone end in gross sins; and gross sins in desperation: love of pleasures, if uncontrolled, will end in drunkenness, or adultery; and envy, in murder and violence: sins unchecked grow licentious and unruly: Judas allowed his covetousness, and it brought him to betray his Master; and that brought him to the halter: Gehazi was first blasted with covetousness, and then with leprosie, and so became a burden to himself: Ananias and Sapphira taken off by a sudden judgment: The devil loveth by lust to bring us to sin, and by sin to shame, and by shame to horror and despair; so that if we walk after our lusts, it proveth a sad walk in the issue: Again, it disturbeth our peace with others; these Libertines were yokeless, and could not endure restraints, because wedded to their own lusts; 'tis not opinions divide the world, so much as lusts and interests.*

7. *The more you walk after your lusts, the more you may: they are not quenched when they are satisfied, but increased rather, as the fire is, by laying on of new fuel; the distemper groweth every day, till you are quite enslaved: given to much wine, 'tis *δυναμικόν*, enslaved to wine in the Greek: In this sence we are said to be brought under the power of the creature, 1 Cor. 6. 12. so that what ever shame or loss ensueth, you cannot leave your lusts, Jer. 18. 12. There is no hope, &c. they see 'tis bad; and cannot see how it should be otherwise.*

Tit. 1. 7;
Tit. 2. 3,

8. What can we get by sin but a *little pleasure*? Tit. 3. 3. *serving divers lusts and pleasures*, this is the great Sorcerers that enchants the whole world, the root of all sin, *they loved pleasures more then God*, 2 Tim. 3. 4. 'tis not imaginable that an intelligent creature should rest in his own action; we aim at somewhat in walking after our own lusts, if we balk that which is *honest*, it must be *profit* or *pleasure*: now that a man should enslave himself for ever; and that for a *little pleasure*, which is base in it self, and lost as soon as enjoyed, is monstrous and absurd: *Breve est quod delectat, eternum quod cruciat*; the pleasure is but *short*, vanishing, but the pain is for ever? and will you for a thing of nought break with God, and forfeit your immortal souls? Oh let it not be.

Let all this now perswade you to *deny your lusts*, rather then to *feed or cherish* them, to *renounce* them, and not to *walk after* them: There are three degrees of this denial: 1. They must be *prevented*, and kept from rising. 2. *Suppressed*, and kept from growth. 3. We must not *accomplish* them, and if they gain consent, keep them from execution: suitable to which three degrees, there are three duties: 1. *Mortification*, that we may prevent them. 2. *Watchfulness*, that we may suppress them. 3. *Resolution*, that we may not accomplish them.

1. To begin with the top and highest degree is to prevent the lust, 1 Pet. 2. 11. *Abstain from fleshly lusts*, 'tis not enough to abstain from *acts of sin*; but we must abstain from *lusts*, yea the root must be deadened, Gal. 5. 24. *Crucifie the flesh*, she is chaste that checketh an unclean solicitation; but she is more worthy praise whose grave carriage forbiddeth all assaults and attempts in that kind, so should we be so mortified as to prevent a temptation, not to have a lust stirring: but because this cannot always be, 2. The next degree is, *timely to suppress them*, *laus est aliqua in secundis stare*, to *conquer lust* when we cannot curb it, and wholly keep it under: *Dash Babylons brats against the stone*, and take the *little foxes*, smother it in the conception, Jam. 1. 15. 'tis a great sin to quench the Spirits motions; so 'tis a great neglect not to take notice of the *first thoughts* and risings of sin; the *little sticky kindle first*, and set the *great ones on fire*; crush the Cockatrice in the eg; *the flesh riseth up in arms* against every gracious motion, so should *the Spirit*; the better part against every

every sinful motion, *Gal. 5. 17.* chide away your carnal thoughts, and let them not finde harbour; if the envious man throw weeds over the Garden wall, the Gardener will not let them root there; if Sathan cast in thoughts, cast them out again with indignation.

3. *Let not worldly lusts be put in execution.* If thou hast neglected the mortification and deadning of the affections; if sin hath got the start of thee, and gained a consent, yet at least restrain the practice, *Jam. 1. 15.* *Lust when it hath conceived, bringeth forth sin,* that is, an external sinful action, there are *works of the flesh*, that follow the lusts of the flesh, *Gal. 5. 15.* 'tis good to stop at last, though the lust grieveth the Spirit of God, yet the work, beside the grief, bringeth dishonour to God, giveth an ill example, bringeth scandal to Religion, maketh way for an habit and further proneness to sin; therefore if thou hast not prevented the lust, act not the sin, *Mic. 2. 1, 2.* *Wo be to them that devise evil upon their beds, and when the morning is light, they practise it:* 'tis naught to harbour the motion, to plot and muse upon sin, but 'tis worse practise it, for every act strengthens the inclination; as a brand that hath been once in the fire, is more ready to burn again; if the devil have kindled a fire in thy bosom, let not the sparks fly abroad, but keep the temptation within doors, lest thou more betray thyself into Sathans hands.

The third clause in this Application of *Enochs* prophesie is, that *[their mouth speaketh great swelling words.]* In *Enochs* prophesie not only ungodly deeds are noted, but hard speeches; these *Gnosticks* were faulty both ways, both in word and deed: that which is charged here is a fault in their speech. 'Tis said *Dan. 11. 36.* *The King shall speak marvellous things against the God of gods.* In the Sermon in the same phrase is used that is here, *καὶ ὁ βασιλεὺς ὑψωθήσεται καὶ μεγαλυνθήσεται ἐπὶ πάντας θεούς, καὶ λαλήσει ὑπερόψα,* and so obviously it may imply their blasphemies against God, a crime of which these wretches were guilty in exalting *Simon Magus* above the true God: or else these *swelling words* may relate to their boasting of their own knowledge, from whence they were called *Gnosticks*; and *Tertulian* saith of them, *omnes tument, omnes scientiam pollicentur, ipsæ mulieres hæreticæ cum sunt procaces!* They all swell with pride, and make ostentation of *desper knowledge*, their very women, how conceited are they!

Or

Or else it may signifie their *proud censures* of others, their scorning of the *Guides* of the Church, as 'tis said of some, *Psal. 73. 9. They speak loftily, they set their mouth against the heavens, their tongue walketh through the earth*; they took a liberty to speak of all things and persons at pleasure, without any restraint, which was and is the very *genius* of these and other *Seducers*: rather, I suppose, though not excluding the other senses, these *swelling words* relate to their *phraseologie* and *unfavoury gibberish*, which they used in representing their opinion; *Peter* calleth them, *swelling words of vanity*, 2 *Pet. 2. 18.* The Note from hence is this.

Observ. 3. That the pride and vanity of *Seducers* is usually betrayed in the fondness and affectedness of their expressions. The affected language of the *Gnosticks* and *Valentinians* may be seen in *Irenæus*; and how much this pattern hath been improved by men of a fanatical spirit, may be found in those that have written of the Heresies of succeeding Ages: *Jerome* taxeth *Jovinian* with * his swelling words: In times more modern, *Swinkfield* was observed to be always talking of *Illumination*, *Deification*, &c. and the *Familists* cant is not unknown, of being *godded with God*, and *christed with Christ*; so *Jacob Behmen's* greening of the inward root, &c. and *Calvin's* faith of the *Libertines* of his time, *communi sermone spreto, exoticum nescio quid idiom sibi fingunt, interea nihil spirituale afferunt*; they pretend to matters more spiritual, and when all cometh to all, 'tis but noisome errors disguised, or common thing represented in uncouth forms of speech, which the Scriptures own not, rational, and truly spiritual men understand not: The same unfavoury and unintelligible forms of speech may be observed in a wicked Book, lately put forth by a Knight of this Country, called, *The retired mans Meditations*, wherein the highest principles of our most holy faith are endeavoured to be undermined by this Artifice of covert and affected speech, but that by the providence of God, the Book fell under neglect and scorn, presently upon the publication: Now the reason of this affectation is (I suppose) to amuze the Reader with the pretence of *mystery* and *depths*, *Rev. 2. 24.* that despising the *simplicity of the world*, and the common and avowed principles, he may be more pliable to their carnal fancies, which if nakedly exposed at first, would have nothing of allurements and temptation in them

to

* Descriptio Apostoli Joviniani loquentem buccis instrumentibus & insensata verba eruditantem Hieron. lib. 1. adversus Jovin.

to any well disposed minds: Well then, be not wrapt into admiration with novel and conceited expressions, nor troubled with oppositions of science, falsely so called, 1 Tim. 6. 20. This is the Devils device, first to maze the people, (as birds are with a bell in the night) and then to drive them into the net: If you would keep to wholesom doctrine, keep to a form of wholesome words, and do not place Religion in conceited speaking; an *holy dialect* I know becometh Saints; but an *affected phraseology* is one of Satans lures, and a means to corrupt many.

The fourth Clause is, [*Having mens persons in admiration because of advantage.*] *Junius* applieth this to those that set up Angels and unknown names, and persons in the Church, instead of Christ; but I think 'tis rather to be applied to men; *person* is therefore put for the outward state and appearance, in which fence 'tis said, *Thou shalt have no respect of persons in judgment*; that is, of their outward condition and estate; * accepting of * As Ge. 19. 21. *persons* is rendred by the Septuagint by *παράδειξιν τὸ πρόσωπον*, *Nashti panccha*, the word wondring at a mans face or out-side, as being overcome and dazzled at the splendor of it; accordingly our Apostle saith here, *Having mens persons in admiration*; now this they did for advantage, that is, either to gain men to their party, by crying them up as *holy and knowing*, to the contempt of others who were more valuable for the sincerity of Religion; or else for worldly profits sake, those whom they feared, or from whom they expected any worldly profits, as the rich and powerful, upon these would they fawn, and with these in a servile manner insinuate themselves, commending their actions, and magnifying their persons.

Having been so long in the former part of the Verse, I shall but mention the Notes here.

1. *None so fawning and base spirited as the proud for their advantage*; these spoke swelling words, and yet basely crouching for profits sake. *Ambrose* noteth it of a spirit of ambition, *ut dominetur aliis prius servit curvatur obsequio ut honore donetur*; none stoop so low as they that have a mind to rise; * one observed of some, *That some are willing to take Cham's curse upon them, to dwell near in the Tents of Shem*; that is, would be servants of servants, slaves to great mens servants, that they may lord it over Gods Heritage; men of proud insulting spirits shew low for their own ends; as *Abfalom* courteth the people, to justle his father out of the

the Throne, 2 Sam. 15. 2, 3, 4, 5. and Tacitus observeth the like of *Otho*, that he did *projicere oscula, adorare vulgus, & omnia serviliter pro imperio*; adore the people, kiss the meanest, basely dispense his courtesie to the vilest, all to further his designs upon the Empire: so *Ammianus Marcellinus*, lib. 25. observeth the same of *Julian*, That out of affectation of popularity, he delighted to converse with the meanest of the people; certainly a proud spirit is no great spirit, no more then a swollen arm can be accounted big.

Observat. 5.

2. *Having mens persons in admiration for advantage, is a sin*: We may admire the gifts of God in others, so as to praise the giver; but not so as to be guilty of *anthropolatry*, or man-worship, 1 Cor. 3. 21. not so as to despise others, who have their usefulness, and it may be as excellent a gift in another kind, 1 Cor. 12. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11. not so as to promote our interests thereby; this is servile flattery condemned in the Text; and *Hysai* 7. 8. not so as to be afraid to tell them their own, or for fear or favour to wrest the truth of God, Mat. 22. 16. *Thou teachest the way of God in truth, neither carest thou for any man; for thou regardest not the person of men*: Let all regard this, especially the Ministers of Christ.

Observat. 6.

3. *That seducers are apt to insinuate with great persons, and men of power and interest, that having their ear and countenance, they may engage them against the truth*: Having not truth of their side, they use the more craft; as the Ivy, not being able to support it self, twineth about the Oak till it sucketh out its heart: Gods Messengers carry it more openly, and with a single plainness, see 2 Cor. 1. 12. Creepers and fawning parasites do but draw a suspicion upon themselves; surely Gods cause is able to stand upon its own legges, and needeth not the support of any Artifice.

But is it not lawfull to use some prudence in this kind, and to insinuate with great men for the advantage of a good cause?

I Answer, To be over solicitous in this kind, argueth distrust of Gods providence, and draweth suspicion upon the way which we would needs maintain; that matter is not very combustible where men blow so hard; what favour cometh in the fair way of Gods providence, we may accept; *All men seek the Rulers face; but every mans judgment is of the Lord*; and what may be gotten by honest, open, and lawfull means, as by humble addresses, and the magnetick virtue of truth its self, and the holiness

of

of them that maintain it, may be sought after; thus the Apostles dealt with the Rulers and great ones, to gain their respect to Christianity, that they might with less prejudice insinuate the truth to the people, *Acts* 18.8. and *Acts* 19.31. Some of the chief of *Asia* were friends to Paul: but now when this respect is to be gotten by *clancular* and *dishonest arts*, and cannot be kept without flattering them in their sins, or compliance with their lusts and carnal designs, and men stretch their consciences, and make it their business to humour those, that they may advance them, and trample upon all that may be called *right* and *honesty*, to accomplish their ends, and magnifie those who n they would have scorned, if their station had not been so big; This is to have *mens persons in admiration for advantage.*

4. Usually men of a false way in Religion admire those of their *Observat.* 7. own party, above others of known worth and integrity: this is one part of the sence; all of their own way they accounted *Gnosticks*, that is, *knowing persons*; as if others, how much soever owned by God, as having the stamp and impress of gifts and graces upon them, were not to be compared with them; this is the *genius* of all Sectaries, *Illic ipsum esse est promereri*, saith *Tertullian*, 'Tis Religion enough to be one of them.

VERSE XVII.

But Beloved remember ye the words which were spoken before of the Apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ.

HAVING described these Seducers, he exhorteth those to whom he wrote to beware of them, alledging the warning of the *Apostles*, to shew that not only *Enoch*, who might be supposed to speak of the wicked men of his own time, but the *Apostles*, who expressly spake of the present Age, foretold that scoffers and sons of *Belial* should arise in the Church.

There is nothing difficult in this Verse, only a doubt is to be discussed: Doth not this passage yield an Argument against

† ΠΡΩΤΩΝ
ΤΩΝ ΠΡΕΣΒΥΤΕΡΩΝ
ΛΕΓΩΝ.

the Authority of this Epistle? he speaketh of *Apostles*, and † of *words spoken before* by them, as if he were of an inferiour orb, and writing long after their publication of the Word. I Answer, No.

1. Peter maketh mention of the *Epistles of Paul*, yet it doth not weaken his Authority, 2 Pet. 3.15,16.

2. In the place exactly parallel to this, 2 Pet. 3.2,3. that *Apostle* citeth other writings, yet avoweth his Apostolical Authority; Be mindful of the words spoken before by the holy Prophets, and the commandment of us the *Apostles of Jesus Christ*.

3. This term [*before spoken of*] only sheweth that he wrote late, when either the *Apostles* were dead, or their writings were common in the Church.

But why doth he quote the *words of the Apostles*, neither urging his own Authority, nor including himself, as *Peter* doth? I Answer, Partly out of modesty, to point at the place whence he had taken these things, and to shew that he was not ashamed to use and alludge the writings of his fellow *Apostles*.

2. To declare their mutual consent: *In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established.*

3. His own Authority is implied in vouching theirs, and before expressed, when he calleth himself [*The Brother of James.*]

Notes from this Verse are these.

From that [*Beloved*] which compellation is used to note his affection in this writing; the like is used by *Peter*, 2 Pet. 3.1. *Beloved, I thought meet, &c. When we declaim against errors, we should do it out of love, and a tender respect to the good of souls: In all contests we had need watch our own hearts; people suspect us to act out of peevishness and sinister affections, to serve a sect and party, and our engagement to be faction, not zeal; therefore be the more careful that the flame be pure; incense must not be kindled with strange fire, nor zealous engagements arise from a carnal impulse.*

Again, We may be earnest against error, when corrupt men are gotten into esteem; but 'tis in love to you, if we express our selves with some warmth and affection; 'tis for God, and your souls are concerned: 'tis observable, *John*, the *Disciple of love*, is most earnest against deceivers; *bid them not God speed*, saith he, 2 *Joh.* 10. and every where in his *Epistles*, *My little children believe*

believe not every spirit, &c. there are many Anti-Christ's, men that ly, and have not the truth; 'tis sad, your Ministers should be looked upon as enemies, because they love you, and warn you; But you will say, 'Tis out of perverseness, to serve their faction, and to cast an odium upon parties opposite to themselves: I Answer, *Charity thinketh no evil*; we should not interpret the worst; those that storm at a warning give a shrewd presumption of their own guilt: usually persons that object thus, are such as would have us tamely to suffer the honour and interest of our Lord and Master Jesus Christ to be trampled under foot; but 'tis our hearts desire that tender consciences may know, that 'tis not the shame of others, but their good, which we aim at.

From that [*Remember,*] *Seasonable remembrance of truths is a great help and relief to the soul*; Joh. 2. 22. *When he was risen from the dead, the Disciples remembered, &c.* In events 'tis good to remember *Prophecies*, they confirm the soul, and support it against the present distress and temptation; both *sins* and *discomforts* arise from forgetfulness mostly, and want of actual remembrance, *Hive ye forgotten, Heb. 12. 5.* but now when the spirit is ready with the remedy, as the flesh is with the temptations, 'tis a mighty support; in the debates between the carnal and spiritual part, *seasonable thoughts* carry it; I do not say bare thoughts do it, unless God be in them; there may be gracious disallowing thoughts, and yet the flesh go away with the victory for all that, but this is the way by which the Spirit of God worketh by fresh and seasonable thoughts; he posseth the heart, and inclineth it to the better side: Well then, let your memories be as an Ark or Chest, in which the Tables are kept; lay up a good stock of knowledge, that you may have truths always fresh and present with you, 'twill be an help to prayer, Eph. 6 17, 18. *Take the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, praying always, &c.* a check to temptations to sin, Psal. 119. 9. *I have hid thy word in my heart, that I might not sin against thee*; a support in afflictions, Heb. 12. 5. a remedy against error, John 14. 26.

The next Clause is [*the words spoken before*] *The Prophecies of Observation, 3. Scripture evince the truth of it*; things are there spoken long before they fall out, not only before the event, but before the causes or remote tendencies to such an event; wise men may guess when they see probabilities, and foretel that which dependeth on

natural causes ; the Devil can many times shrewdly interpret the *predictions of the word* ; but a certain *prescience of what is future*, and merely in it self *contingent*, is the prerogative of God, *Isa.* 41. 22. *Let them foretell things to come*, &c. this is done in the Scripture, *Cyrus* is mentioned by name an hundred years before he was born, *Isa.* 25. 1. The birth of *Josiah* 300. years before it came to pass, *1 Kings* 13. 2. The building of *Jericho* 500. years before it was re-edified, *Josh.* 7. 26. with *1 Kings* 16. 34. The great promise of Christ in Paradise, accomplished a thousands of years afterward ; the people of the Jews were ever warned by Prophecie of the good or bad that beset them ; Scripture was to them not only an *Authenick Register*, but an *infallible prognostication* ; these two signal providences of the rejection of the Jews, and the calling of the Gentiles, were they not abundantly foretold, and accordingly came to pass ? Can there be any compact here ? When the Jews were the keepers of the Oracles of God, would they soist in Prophecies against themselves ? Well then, venture upon the truth of the word more than you have done ; God hath ever hitherto stood to his word ; rather then he would go back from it, he would not only cast off his *antient people*, but send his *own Son*, to suffer a shameful and an accursed death ; he that hath been faithful hitherto, is he like to fail at last ?

Observat. 4. I go on in the Text, [*of the Apostles of our Lord Jesus,*] *That the words of the Apostles are the Rule of faith* ; these were *legati a latere*, sent from the side of Christ ; they had an extraordinary mission and call immediately from Christ, as Christ from the Father, *John* 17. 18. and *John* 20. 21. they had *extraordinary gifts*, as infallibility, *quoad hoc*, as to the work of an Apostle, the power of working miracles, &c. and ordinary gifts in an extraordinary manner, as *tongues*, &c. they were to *write Scripture*, and to consign a Rule to the use of the Church in all ages : *This word of the Kingdom must be Preached till the end come*, *Mat.* 24. 14. and Christ prayed for no more then do *believe through their word*, *John* 17. 20. and to them he said, *Mat.* 28. *I am with you to the end of the world* ; no other doctrine can we expect till we come to study Divinity in the Lambs face.

Observat. 5. Once more, these *Apostles of the Lord*, were *Paul* and *Peter*, *2 Tim.* 2. 15, 2, 3, 4. *Peter*, *2 Pet.* 3. 2, 3. From whence *Judas* taketh many passages.

Tis

'Tis not unlawful to make use of the writings of other men. Compare the fifteenth and sixteenth Chapters of *Isaiah* with the 48. of *Jeremiah*, especially *Isa.* 16. 8, 9, 10, 11. verses, with *Jer.* 48. 32, 33, 34, 35, 36. and you shall see how they agree almost word for word; the gifts and labours of others are for our use, not to feed laziness, but to exercise industry, in some cases if we speak, *isdem pæne literis & syllabis*, (as *Melanchthon* wished *Divines* would) in the same words, 'tis not a fault in controversies and positive truths, better make use of old words, then coyn new matter: many now scoff at common truths, as if Preachers did but talk like clocks, one after another; Doctrine cannot be varied? a good scribe indeed must bring forth out of his Treasury things both new and old, represent common things in a fresh satisfactory way; yet 'tis not altogether unlawful to make use of the words of others, where they are apposite and emphatical, not lazily to go on in the tract, but as improving their conceptions.

Yet again, *Jude* an Apostle quoteth Apostles; *Daniel* a Prophet read in the Prophecies of *Jeremiah*, *Dan.* 9. 2. Peter was conversant in the Epistles of *Paul*, *2 Pet.* 3. 16. *Paul* himself had a care of the Parchments, that is (as some suppose) the Volumes and Books of Scripture, *1 Tim.* 4. 13. Certainly the Scripture is not only for novices and young beginners, but for the highest, a study becoming the most eminently gifted; there is a passage, *Psal.* 119. 75. Let those that fear thy name turn unto me, and those that have known thy testimonies; that turning to him some understand of joyning with him in friendship and familiarity, as certainly godly men, by a secret inclination, are moved to joyn one with another; others make the end of turning to him to behold in him a pattern and example of the Lords grace; but the *Chaldean* paraphrase thus, turns to my Doctrine; those that know let them come to know more. Well then, do not rest in the light you have, and think that you are above these helps, you may be further instructed and established; if you had all knowledge, there are affections to be wrought upon; you may be quickned, if not learn; Ministers and those that abound in knowledge may be stirred up by the admonitions and exhortations of others.

VERSE XVIII.

It is that they told you that there should be Mockers in the last time, walking after their own ungodly lusts.

How that they told you] he meaneth not in *word*, but in *writings*; they told the Church in general, but the Apostle applieth it to them; places are every where, *1 Tim.* 4. 1. *2 Tim.* 3. 1. *Acts* 20. 29, 30. [*in the last time.*] The days when the Gospel was first Preached are so called in a double sence, either with respect to the *approaching judgements* on the Jews, *1 Job.* 2. 18. *Little children now it is the last time*, the lease of our mercies was running out apace; so James telleth the carnal Jews, *Jam.* 5. 3. *Ye have heaped up treasure for the last days*; when God was pulling down and plucking up, they were scraping and hoarding no wealth, and so became a greater prey to the destroyer. 2. Or because then the *last dispensation* began, which God would continue without change unto the worlds end. *Heb.* 1. 2. *He hath in these last days spoken to us by his Son*; the Lord hath now fully revealed his mind, and the Doctrine of salvation is put into a settled course, never more to be altered.

But why do the Scriptures speak so much of *Scoffers in the last time*?

I Answer, 1. Either by way of *aggravation*, that there should be scoffers then, when God had sealed Doctrine by the coming of his Son, beyond which godly men did not desire a greater confirmation.

2. Or *διακρίσεις*, by way of *distinction*, more Mockers in the last time rather than another; partly because the world was still continued, notwithstanding the threatnings of its destruction, *2 Pet.* 3. 4. partly because the holy people were then divided, *Jews* and *Christians*, and times of division prove times of *Atheism* and *scoffing*: partly because carnal hopes of a temporal Messiah were disappointed, and by that means their assent was much weakened as to principles of faith.

[*Mockers*] Some think it implieth *Seducers*, who by deluding, do, as it were, make a mock of men; but I suppose 'tis rather taken

taken properly, for such as in the old Testament are termed *scorners*, Prov. 9. or *scorners*; when men sleight that of which themselves or others have had an high esteem, they usually do it by scorning and scoffing, thereby the more to deface all feelings of conscience: If you enquire what they mocked at? 1 Answer in general, it seemeth to be the Lordship of Christ; in particular, the glorious exercise of it at the day of judgement; *Where is the promise of his coming?* 2 Pet. 3. 4. and therefore is Enoch's Prophecie produced, which foretelleth the *Lords coming with ten thousands of his Saints*, and Hierom in *Isa.* lib. 14. cap. 51. telleth us of a discourse between *Peter and Simon Magus*, (against whose School and Sect our Apostle is supposed to write) concerning the destruction of the world: *If God be good (saith Simon) why will he destroy that which is good; if the world be bad, how is God good that made it?* &c.

These Scorners are said [*to walk after their own ungodly lusts*] walking implieth their setled course and daily custom of life, and their *lusts* are called *ungodly lusts*; partly to note the profane temper of their spirits, and partly to distinguish them from the motions and lustings of the new nature.

The Notes are these.

1. *What is told to the Church in general, we must apprehend it Observ. 1.* as told to us. Paul telleth *Timothy*, and Peter telleth the distressed strangers, and *Jude* saith, they told you: So Heb. 12 5. *The exhortation speaketh to you*, &c. As if the Hebrews were the persons to whom the Proverbs were directly written: the Scriptures speak to every age, every Church, every person, no less than to those to whom they were first directed; well then, it sheweth us how we should be affected in reading the word, we should read it as a letter written by the hand of God from Heaven to us by name; if an Angel should bring us a letter from Heaven, certainly we would regard it; the Bible is a Message sent from Heaven to acquaint us with the mind of God; if we own the divine authority of it, why do we regard it no more?

2. *We should not be troubled at what is foretold?* monsters ex-Observ. 2. pected are not wondered at, expectation as it desloweth any good thing that we expect, so it fore-armeth the mind against evil, Job. 16. 4. *These things I have told you, that when the time shall come ye may remember. I have told you, why? what good will*

will that do? *Ans.* we are the better prepared to entertain evils when we expect them before they come; and the evil to which the mind is accustomed seemeth the less; again, we have an experience of Gods truth in the prediction, which will help us to believe and depend upon other promises: finally it assureth us that the Lord hath a hand and a counsel in all our troubles, for he told us of them before.

Observ. 3.

Mundus senescens patitur phantasiam.
Gerison,

3. That the Scriptures speak much of the evil of the latter times, there is more knowledge, and yet more sin and error; knowledge where it is not sanctified puffeth up and maketh men curious, and so they have an itch after novelties; or else it maketh men wicked, exasperating our evil affections, and so none so bad as they that sin against light; thence much of the error and profaneness in the latter days: Again, the latter days are as the bottom and sink that receiveth the dregs of foregoing ages; and as the world groweth old it is much given to dreams and dotage: Once more, much division there will be, and beating their fellow-servants, *Matth. 24. 29.* much *Libertinism*; instead of casting off Ceremonies, they will cast off Ordinances, and desire to be freed not only from the Popes Laws, but the very Law of Christ.

Observ. 4.

Among other sins that are found in the latter times, there will be many Scoffers. Partly because in times of controversie men will lose all awe; when truths are made questionable, assent is weakened; partly because in times of liberty men will give vent to their thoughts; partly because the scandals of professing Christians will make many turn Atheists; partly because fabulous conceits concerning the coming and temporal Kingdom of Christ will make men question the whole doctrine of his coming: Well then, wonder not if you find many scoffing at the authority of the Scriptures, God-head of Christ, Day of Judgement, the Ordinances, Fasting and Prayer. The latter age will yield such kind of men, and 'tis one of the arts of Sathan, by his Instruments to make things of the saddest and most serious concernment to seem ridiculous, that when once the awe of these blessed truths is weakened, men may be more easily induced to cast off both the concernment and profession of them.

Mockers and Scoffers are usually the worst of sinners. In the first Psalm there are three degrees of sinners mentioned, and the highest rank are those that sit in the seat of sinners, *Psal. 1. 1.* the
Sept.

Sept. render there *λοιμῶν*, the chair of pestilence, these are the pests of mankind; *scorning* cometh from custom in sinning, and maketh way for freedom in sinning; when Conscience is seared, and men have lost not only restraints of grace, but natural modesty, then they fall a scoffing; and when once they are turned scoffers nothing will reclaim them, reproofs enrage them; *rebuke a Scornor and he will hate thee*, Prov. 9. 8. yea, none do the Devil so much service in perverting others, as they; if your feet have been taken in this snare of death, extricate your selves betimes, beg earnestly for the more grace, there is some hope, God inviteth Scorners, Prov. 1. 22.

Again observe, *Those that cast off the awe of the Lords coming* Observ. 6. will certainly give up themselves to brutish lusts: Those mockers that said where is the promise of his coming, are said here to walk after their own lusts, *Negantes enim penam negant; & disciplinam*, saith Tertullian, de resurrect. cap. 11. denying the Resurrection of the flesh, they must needs be fleshly; for therefore they denied the day of his coming, to avoid the fear of his judgment.

It argueth a state of wickedness to walk after our own lusts. That Observat. 7. is, when sin and lust is our constant practice; a godly person may too often do according to his lusts; but he does not walk therein, 'tis not his constant road and path, pag. 68. 21. *He will wound the head of his enemies, and the hairy scalp of such an one as goeth on still in his trespasses*; such as go on still are there accounted enemies to God: but what is it to walk in sin? I Answer, to make lust our principle, our course, our end. Our principle; whatever a wicked man goeth about, he doth it out of some carnal impulse; his good duties are either to hide a lust or feed a lust; if he abstain from one sin, 'tis to feed another; again, when 'tis our way and course, carnal men follow earthly things with greatest earnestness and delight; but heavenly things in a sleight and overly manner; the world and the flesh is their *ἔργον*, their business, all their care and comfort is in it; and this is their end, to please themselves, and to satisfy their lusts: Well then, *walk in the Spirit, that you may not fulfil the lusts of the flesh*. See verse 16.

VERSE XIX.

These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit.

HERE the Apostle cometh to inform them who these *Mockers* were, of whom the Apostles of the Lord spake; he describeth them by three notes.

1. *They separate themselves.* 2. *Sensual.* 3. *Not having the Spirit.*

1. [*These be they who separate themselves*] ὅς ἀποδοκιμασάμενος ἑα-
νὴς, the old English Translation had it thus, *these are the Makers*
of Sects; the word signifieth those which determinate and pluck
up the bounds which God hath set. The Apostle meaneth those
that without any necessity and warrant from God, cut off them-
selves from the communion of the Church.

2. *Sensual*, ψυχικοί, *animal or Soul-men*, men that have no-
thing but a reasonable Soul, which being corrupted mindeth
only the things of the flesh, and so noteth fleshly corrupt men.
Tertullian when leavened with *Montanism*, called the Orthodox
psychicos because they did not, with *Montanus*, condemn second
marriages; the word is notable, it will be some advantage to
us to consider it a little more fully: 'Tis three times used in
Scripture, as in 1 Cor. 2. 14. the natural man ψυχικός, who is
opposed to πνευμαλικός the spiritual man: So in James 3. 15.
The wisdom that is from above is earthly, sensual [ψυχικὴ] *devi-*
lish; and then in this place, the word (as I said before) properly
signifieth those that have a Soul, and ψυχικός is elsewhere used for
the *sensitive Soul*, as where the Apostle distinguisheth of *Body*,
Soul, and *Spirit*, 1 Thes. 5. 23. σῶμα, ψυχὴ, πνεῦμα, where
by πνεῦμα *spirit*, he understandeth the intellectual or rational
part, by ψυχὴ *Soul*, the meer animal or sensitive part, or that
sensual appetite which we have in common with the beasts, by
σῶμα *body*, that which is commonly understood by it, the body
as it is the Organ and Instrument of the Soul, and this is one
reason why ψυχικοί cometh to signify *sensual*; the other is be-
cause man being left to himself to meer *Soul-light* or *Soul-incli-*
nations,

nations, can bring forth no other fruits then such as are carnal; for whilst men are destitute of sanctifying grace, *sense* and the *flesh* do reign in their full liberty and power: Well then, these seducers were sensual, given up to brutish lusts and practices; they taxed others as carnal, and now none so libidinous, impure and carnal, as they.

3. *Not having the Spirit*; this is added, not only to shew that they were destitute of true grace and regeneration: but partly to rebuke their *vain pretences*; the *Gnosticks* and other filthy seducers of that time, did arrogate to themselves a singularity and peculiarity of the Spirit, as if all others were carnal, they only had the Spirit; whereas indeed the contrary was true, they giving up themselves to such filthy practices, shewed that they had nothing of the Spirit in them; see *Iranæus*, lib. 1. cap. 9. sect. 6. 7. Partly to shew the incompatibleness of the Spirit with a fleshly and carnal life.

Notes from hence are these.

That separation or dividing our selves from the fellowship of Gods Church is sinful, or a work of the flesh: The Apostle describeth carnal persons, and of them he saith, *They separate themselves*, and accordingly the Apostle reckoneth *ἑξαρσιστὰς αἰσχρῶς*, *seditionous heresies*, or *sect-makings* in the Church among the works of the flesh, *Gal. 5. 20.* and with good reason; to leave the Church is to leave God; *Cain* was the first *separatist* we read of, *Gen. 4. 19.* *He went out from the presence of the Lord*; God is every where; how from his presence? the meaning is, from the Church, where is the presence of his grace; why should we run from the *Shepherds Tents* where Christ feedeth at noon? *1. Cor. 1. 9, 10.* And as 'tis contrary to our love to God, so to our love to the Saints, to which we are so solemnly engaged; the question of separation lieth much in the dark, but obligations to love are clear and open, see *Eph. 4. 4, 5, 6.* 'Tis sad that many that pretend much to Religion make no conscience of *Schism*, and offending the brethren, by withdrawing from them, as if Christs precepts of love were not to be stood upon, as certainly they are not by them who draw their liberty to the highest, and in indifferent matters rather take that course which will offend.

Once more, 'tis little for the honour of Christ, that his body is crumbled into small bits and portionets; he prayed, *Let them*

be one, that the world may know that thou hast sent me; implying that our divisions and breaking into sects would breed suspicion of the Gospel in the hearts of men, as if that great mystery of redemption by him, were but a well devised fable: Yet again, this running into parties and sects, is our great hindrance and disadvantage: partly in *spiritual things*, for all duties of spiritual commerce and communion are fore-born; 'tis said here, *These separate themselves*; but beloved, *do ye edifie one another in your holy faith*; implying, that though others withdraw, and omit all duty in this kind, th^{se} that continue in the body will contribute their mutual help and care to confirm and bui'd up one another; a draught of wine is best reserved in the hofthead, and Christians in their societies; coals lying together keep in the heat, Apostacy began in forsaking the assemblies, *Heb. 10. 23.* and *25.* and *1 John 2. 19.* Partly as to our outward peace and welfare; separation sets others against us, and us against them, it exacerateth mens minds against you, when you give out as if you were more pure and holy then others, *Isa. 65. 5. Stand by thy self, come not neer me, for I am holier then thou*: *Gracius singularity* is many times envied and hated, but certainly *peevish singularity* draweth a just scorn upon its self; and it setteth you against others; men seldom separate, but their hearts are much estranged from those from whom they separate, for Religious ties being once broken are hardly made up again; *civil ruptures* are not carryed on with such vehemency, and are sooner closed again; but Religion being the highest bond and ligament, when 'tis once violated, the breach is the more irreconcilable.

Thus you see the evils of *Schism* or *separation*; but because this is many times *perversly charged*, we must look a little more into the nature of it; the Spouse had her Vail rent, and Gods own people have been burdened with the imputation of *Schism* and *Faction*; it will concern us to state what *separation* is sinful: In general, such as dissolveth that union and love which should be among Christians; or an unnecessary, unjust or rash departure from fellowship, and communion with one another in the Ordinances of Christ.

This separation 1. Supposeth that there was once an union: we cannot be said to separate from the world of infidels, as Pagans, Turks, Jews, with whom we were never united, as water when the Ice is dissolved cannot be said to be separated (in the

the fence we now take it) from bodies Heterogeneous, as straws, wood, &c. because never united with them but by accident; *agregation* there is, but not properly a *separation*; separation is a *dissolution of union*, as when one Church separateth from another, who are united in the same body, as parts of the Church universal, or one or more persons from the same particular Congregation of which they are members: I only add to this proposition, That this union is to be understood not only of *what it is de facto*, but *what it ought to be, de jure*; thus persons that ought to joyn themselves, but out of schismatical principles do not, nor never did, joyn themselves to the Churches of Christ, may be guilty of this sinful separation, because there is an union required.

2. *The fault and crime of the Schism is not always in those that do actually separate and withdraw, but in those that cause it*; a man threatneth death to his wife, hereupon she separateth; not *she*, but *he* maketh the separation; Rome obstinately continuing her corruptions, and threatning death to those that warn her; the cause of separation is in Rome, not in us; strings in tune must not be brought down to strings out of tune, but the other set up to them; *Go not thou to them* (saith God to the Prophet) *but let them return to thee*.

3. *Though those that separate be fewer, yet that nothing varieth the case*; Noah and eight persons went into the Ark, and left the world in infidelity; Lot got out of Sodom with one family; *Elijah* was left alone to contest with *Baals* Priests; not the greater, but the *better* part is to be regarded; *Jacobs* family was fewer then the *Canaanites*, and *Israel* less then the rest of the world; Gods witnesses at the first may be but a very handful.

4. *A separation from corruptions, and a separation from those that are corrupt, are two distinct things*; a separation from corruptions is always enjoyned, but not always from those that are corrupted; those Scriptures, *Isa. 52. 11.* and *2 Cor. 6. 17.* speak of a fellowship with men in evil works; but now a separation from men that are corrupt, is sometimes lawful, *Rev. 18. 4.* *Come out of her my people, &c.* and *Jer. 51. 9.* *She would not be healed, &c.* we may separate from such as separate from Christ, and continue obstinate in their corruptions; and sometimes 'tis not lawful, as when a Church is reforming, and purging out those corruptions, or they are not of such moment as that such a desperate remedy should

should be used: a limb is not to be cut off as soon as it akerh, but when 'tis rotten, and likely to endanger the whole body, when evils are incurable, deadly, and contagious, and we can no longer maintain communion without sin; at first 'tis good to try all things.

5. *There are several sorts of separation*, as these distinctions will manifest.

- { 1. *Partial.*
- { 2. *Total.*

Separation is either, { 1. *Negative.*
 { 2. *Positive.*

- { 1. *Universal.*
- { 2. *Particular.*

For the first distinction; there is a *partial separation* when we withdraw from the Communion of the Church in some Ordinances, and not in others; as in the Supper, but not in praying, and hearing of the word.

The second distinction beareth thus: There is a *negative separation*; as when men do not hold communion with some Church, but yet do not joyn elsewhere, but continue waiting for the amendment of that Church. *Positive separation* is, when they embody in another Church-way, setting up Altar against Altar, and threshold against threshold.

The third distinction is to be understood thus. 1. There is a *particular separation*, whereby men renounce communion with the Churches of such a kind and constitution; *Catholick* or *universal separation*, by which men disclaim all Churches extant in the world, as Seekers, and many loose and vagrant persons, that are as yet to chuse Religion, or look for new Messengers from heaven, to resolve the Questions that are now on foot.

Now the more unjust the ground is, the more aggravated is the sin by the degrees of it; if our separation be total and positive, then to deny all Churches, of what constitution soever, argueth an high degree of pride and Schism.

6. *Faulty separation is that which is rash, sinful, and unjust;*
rash,

rash, without any real cause, meerly for our better accommodation; or when we require that of the Church which the Scripture doth not require: *unjust*, without any sufficient cause, occasioning so many scandals and contentions for a trifle, and aggravating every discontent and dissatisfaction to the highest: *sinful*, (I call it) when the grounds are as carnal as the practice, as *reveng*, *personal discontent*; as many in the Primitive times went over to the Sects in stomach and discontent; so *Tertulian* (is reported by some to do) to the Montanists: Or else *corrupt aims* to be in the head of a train or troop, *Acts* 20. 28. 'tis ealie to abuse the innocent credulity of the people; and therefore some wicked spirits make it their work to *draw Disciples after them*: Or it may be *carnal fear* of the severity of discipline, or the censures of the Church, or out of *love of gain*, *2 Tim.* 4. 10. or affectation of novelty, or an higher way than ordinary Christians, or out of *faction*; in *Corinth*, some of *Paul*, some of *Apollos*, some of *Cephas*, *1 Cor.* 11. 21.

7. The only lawful grounds of Separation are three.

1. Intolerable Persecution. 2. Damnable Heresie. 3. Gross Idolatry.

1. Intolerable persecution; when we are thrust out, Christ bid- Under this head deth us flee into another City. 2. Damnable Heresie; we cannot ^{is comprised sin-} bid them God-speed, lest we be partakers of their evil deeds. *2 Joh.* ^{su excommuni-}

11. 3. Gross Idolatry, when we cannot communicate in their ^{9. 34. & 16. 2.} worship without sin. ^{cation. See Joh.}

8. The Scandals of Professors are ground of mourning, but not ground of separation, *1 Cor.* 5. 2. Church Guides must do their Office, discern between the precious and the vile, that the hearts of the righteous be not made sad; yet if not, you have no ground to separate, because God may own them for a Church, though they have many scandals among them; as in *Corinth* there was incest, heresie, profaneness, many that never had repented, *2 Cor.* 12. 21. yet, To the Saints at *Corinth*: we may communicate with a Church without sin, when we have done our duty, that is, informed, warned, mourned; if the word and Ordinances be kept pure for substance, though the persons be corrupt, you may communicate without sin; the Pharisees held the degree of Doctors, and Expositors of the Law, and so far were to be owned, though guilty of much personal wickedness, *Mat.* 23. 2, 3. The Prophets

phets lived in corrupt times, yet did they not separate from the Assemblies of the Church; usually *laziness is the ground of separation*; they are loth to discharge their duty, to take pains, to convince, exhort, and warn their fellow members, or to call upon their Pastors to *take heed to their Ministry*; and some Pastors are loth to be at the labour to gain a rugged people to the obedience of the Gospel, to use that *frequent admonition*, and those *serious addresses* which are necessary for such a purpose, and to expose themselves to encounter those *exasperations* which the discharge of their duty will necessarily draw upon them, and therefore run into separate assemblies, where all things may be carried on more easily.

9. *Lawful separation must not be sudden*, till all due courses be tried, 1 Cor. 13. 7. *Love beareth all things, endureth all things, hopeth all things*; Certainly we should do much, endure much, ere we go off from the communion of any Church; it must be with *grief*; when Physicians cut off an arm or leg, they do not delight in it, but are driven to it of necessity: So when a Judge condemneth a Malefactor, he delighteth not in the punishment: In a civil War, though the *Cause* be just, yet to delight in the executions done upon the enemies, is not without sin, 1 Cor. 13. 5. *Charity rejoiceth not in evil, but rejoiceth in the truth.* * Again, It must be with a mind to return, when the evil is taken away.

* *Ab Ecclesia Romana non alio discessimus animo quam ut si correctis ad priorem Ecclesiam formam redierat, nos quoque ad illam reverteremur.* See my Comment on James. p. 405

10. *For the degrees of separation*, take these rules: If a few separated for a weighty cause, they should only withdraw, tarrying for the Reformation of the Church; but numerous bodies may go on to positive separation; for they ought not to be without Ordinances, but boldly to profess the right way. Again, As long as a lower degree of separation will serve the turn, we should not go to a higher; 'tis a great weakning to the interest of Christ when we presently draw things to an extremity: In smaller differences we must observe the Apostles rule, Phil. 3. 16. But enough of this matter.

The next Point is taken from the second sin mentioned in this Verse, [*sensual*]: he chargeth it upon those that separate themselves. *Those that separate from the Assemblies of the faithful are usually sensual.* Discipline is too streight for them that would live according to their own lusts: The Raven that was sent out of the Ark, finding carrion floating abroad, had no mind to be

Observ. 2.

be cooped up there, and therefore returned not; so these finding more liberty abroad, than in the Congregations of the faithful, separate, and inhaunt with such among whom they may have room for their lusts: Moreover they lose the benefit of those that should watch over them; Church communion is a good prefer-
ative against lusts; Wo to him that is alone, Eccles. 4. 11. Strag-
lers are more easily surprized; They were scattered and became
meat to the beasts of the field, Ezek. 34. 6. They that separate are the more easily perverted both in judgment and practice, they turn Familists; now Familism is but *painted Atheism*, or *Antimo-*
nists; and Antimonism is but *sin licenced* and privileged. Again, 'tis just with God to punish that *pride* wherewith separation is
 accompanied with *brutish lusts*; usually *unsanctified knowledge* run-
 neth into *pride*, & then the affections are not governed; well then,
 observe the providence of God in setting a mark upon those that
 separate, they are men of unbridled affections; and without
 yoke, and are usually given up to carnal pleasures; and wonder
 not if sensual persons cast off communion with the Church,
 when they cast off communion with God himself; *those*
that spent their days in mirth said unto God, depart from us, Job. 21.
 14. Many now that are come to the height of pride and sin,
 pretend to live to the height of the creature.

The next Note is, *That sensual persons are evil persons*, there *Observ. 3*
 are three ranks of sinners, those that are given to *fleshy lusts*, and
 they are the *sensual*; those that are given to the *lust of the eyes*,
 and they are the *worldly*; those that are given to pride of life,
 and those are the *proud*; the *great spirits* of the world, see 1 *Job.*
 2. 16. and *James* 3. 15. with my comment there: our work
 now lieth with the *sensual*, who seem to be the worst sort of sin-
 ners, and altogether unfit for any worthy action and exploit:
 To find them out, let us consider what *sensuality* is; 'tis an *inor-*
ordinate desire and delight in soft and delicate living; there is a due
 care of the body to keep it serviceable, and an allowed delight
 in the creature; he that created *water*, created *wine*, creatures
 for *our delight* as well as *our necessity*; and false Teachers have of-
 ten set off themselves with the shew of a *severer abstinence*; *Col.*
 2. 19. 'tis possible that by an undue rigor the body may be used
 a little too hardly, and disabled for better services; but yet we
 are more usually guilty of the *excess*, then of the *defect*, pleasure

is born and bred with us ; and therefore hath a mighty force and enchantment upon the soul ; the first years of humane life are merely governed by *sense*, and for a great while all our business is to live and grow ; and therefore most men miscarry by appetite, and an undue liberty in meats, drinks, and sports ; now to state the due bounds, and limits, which Reason and Religion hath set, is very hard ; different tempers and constitutions of body make rules uncertain : in the general, 'tis good to watch, lest pleasure become a master, and Reason a slave : The two general limits are, 1. *The health of the body.* 2. *The welfare of the soul.*

1. *The health of the body* must be regarded ; too much care for the body destroyeth it, as too much oyl puts out the Lamp ; *Wine and women take away the heart, Hos. 4. 11.* that is, the generousness and sprightliness of a man, the vigor of nature is abated, gallant and active spirits effeminated, and brave hopes drowned and quenched in the puddle of excess, and masculine agility and vivacity melted away in ease and pleasure : The Romans were wont to have their funerals at the gates of *Venus Temple*.

2. *The souls welfare* is of chief consideration ; we must take heed that the soul be not either *disfitted for duty*, or *disposed for sin*.

1. *Dis-fitted for duty*, when the soul cannot lift up it self to God and divine things, and findeth less aptitude for his service, you are inordinate : *Luke 21. 36. Let not your hearts be over-charged with surfeiting and drunkenness, &c.* the heart may be over-charged when the stomach is not ; when we are warned of *surfeiting and drunkenness*, we think of *vomiting, staggering, reeling, faulting in speech, or gate* ; Oh Christians ! you are guilty of it when the heart is over-charged, and driveth on heavily in holy things : when we are warned of *adultery*, we think only of defiling other mens wives, or scattering our lusts promiscuously, as the beasts do ; but alas, we are guilty of it when the inordinate use of a lawful wife doth quench our vigour and alacrity in our heavenly calling ; *si vinum ex apothecatua, &c.* a man may drink too freely of his hog'shead.

2. We must take care that the soul be not more *disposed to sin* ; *divers lusts and pleasures* are fitly joyned by the Apostle, *Ti. 3. 3.* if we do not watch over pleasures, the heart groweth more wanton and libidinous, the restraints of grace are weaker, and carnal motions more urgent and violent, the heart is nourished, &c.

Jam.

James 5. 5. the enemy put in strength and heart, 1 Peter 2. 11.

Well then, let us beware of sensuality; other things defile a part, as covetousness the soul; but sensual lusts defile the soul and body too, they leave guilt upon the soul, and dishonour upon the body, while 'tis made a *streiner for meats and drinks*, and a channel for lusts to run in: other lusts seem to gratifie the ambition of man, and to exalt him, but these debase him, and turn him out among the beasts: to renounce pleasures is the first thing you must do, if you mean to do any thing in Religion; otherwise you lie open to every temptation, Prov. 25. 18. *The water of the Sanctuary* could not heal the *miry places*, Ezek. 47. 11. which is usually applied to *sensual hearts*; pleasures bring a brawn, and a deadness upon the conscience, and a cloud upon the Understanding: *Daniel* that had the high visions of God lived by pulse: *John Baptist* that had the most eminent Gospel dispensation, *Matth. 11.* fed upon locusts and wild honey; among the Heathens he was counted the most accomplished man that spent more oyl in the Lamp than wine in the bottle: certainly, the *base* of a man is, the more he affects carnal delights, *Eccles. 7. 4.* *The heart of a fool is in the house of mirth*; that which wise men prefer, is better then that which fools make choice of: pleasures are the choice of fools, wise men know them to be baits and snares; that if they be not watched they soon put us out of frame, and unfit us for communion with God, *Eccles. 2. 2.* Once more, this sort of sins enslaveth, and by custome gaineth upon the heart more then others do, and bringeth us under a power which we cannot easily break, 1 Cor. 6. 12. Therefore use pleasures with care and caution, that when we take them they may not take us: Gods people (I suppose) are not so easily tempted to adultery and drunkenness; but beware of gluttony, the throat is a slippery place; and instead of supplying nature, we feed lust; be not too much in the use of carnal delights, lest you suffer this distemper of spirit to take root; *Dives* *sared deliciously every day*; there are times of abstinence, as well as liberal rejoycing in the creature; when our lives are but a diversion from one pleasure to another, nature groweth wanton and unsatisfied, and men live as if they were born to eat, drink, play, sport, and sleep, *Luke 17. 27.* Lastly, take heed of *soliciting lusts* when you should quench them, *Rom.*

13. 14.

Observ. 4.

The next thing that we may observe, is, That *sensual persons have not the Spirit*; these two are contrary, *flesh and Spirit*, Gal. 5. 17. and they that cherish the one, do necessarily banish the other; and as they enlarge the one, they streighten the other; the Spirit is a free Spirit; and sensual persons are very slaves; the Spirit is a pure Spirit, and they are unclean; the Spirit is active, and they are gross and muddy, of a dull and stupid nature; the Spirit worketh intellectual and chaste delights, and they are altogether for base and dreggy pleasures, such a perfect contrariety is there between them: more distinctly take it thus.

1. Sensual men have little of the *enlightning* of the Spirit, their palate is better then their Understanding: Eph. 5. 16. *Be not drunken with wine, wherein is excess, but be filled with the Spirit*; where the fumes of wine, and the motions of the Spirit are opposed as things incompatible; in marsh Countries we do not expect a clear air; so sensual persons have seldom any clear and raised thoughts of God; men given to pleasures can taste *meats and drinks*, but not *Doctrines*.

2. Sensual men have little of the *quicknings and efficacy* of the Spirit; the more they dissolve and melt away their precious hours and spirits in pleasures, the more do they grow sapless, dead, and careless, and lose all tenderness of conscience, and liveliness of affection; they quench the vigor of nature, much more do they quench the Spirit; *Voluptuaries* are said to be *past feeling*, Eph. 9. 19.

3. They have little of the *comforts of the Spirit*; the comforts of the Spirit arise from meditating on the works of God, Psal. 104. 34. or tasting his love, 1 Pet. 2. 3. or contemplating our great hopes, 2 Cor. 4. 18. Now carnal men can relish none of this; they cannot exercise love, or faith, or hope, that they may delight themselves in God, and have some lively tastes of eternal life; when the soul lyeth under the dominion of carnal and dreggy pleasures, 'tis incapable of thinking upon God and his works, or relishing inward consolation, love is pre-occupied.

Well then, we should the more take heed that we be not sensual; never had any sensual person any great measure and portion of the holy Ghost, in gifts or graces; *the Devil easily entereth into swine*, but the holy Spirit of God will not dwell there; a man is put to his choice, which he will have, *pleasures or the*

Spirit:

John 17. 17. Sanctifie them by thy truth, thy Word is truth. [Praying in the Holy Ghost,] ἐν ἁγίῳ πνεύματι may be rendred in, with, or by the Holy Ghost; that is, by his motion and inspiration, and gifts and graces received from him; elsewhere the Holy Ghost is said to pray in us, Rom. 8. 26. and here we pray in the Holy Ghost; he prayeth in us so as we pray in him; he prayeth in us to note the excitations of his grace; we pray in him to imply the concurrence of our faculties, which is to be noted against the Familists, who make the Spirit to be the immediate formal cause of all our actions; as if in the productions of Grace the Spirit did only make use of us as Bilhah did of Rachel, to bring forth upon her knees, Gen. 30. 3. and the action were wholly his own.

The Notes are these.

Objerv. 1.]

1. 'Tis not sufficient to be established or grounded in the faith, but we must daily increase and grow more and more therein. When the foundation is laid, the building must go on piece by piece: they that are contented with a little faith, have no faith; graces though imperfect are always growing, Luk. 17. 5. 'Tis the holy ambition of Christians to be more like God every day: Certainly their temper is contrary to the temper of Gods people, that think they have learned enough, know enough, are holy enough; none are so knowing, but they may know more, so established, but they may be more; here we are in a state of progress, not of rest and perfection; the Corn in the field groweth, though in the Barn it doth not, Eph. 2. 21, 22. Phil. 3. 13. A Christian is always reaching forth and pressing onward, and the nearer he cometh to heaven, his motions and tendencies are the more earnest; as a stone moveth faster the nearer it cometh to the Center; the more he enjoyeth, still he hath new motives to seek more, Prov. 1. 5. A wise man will hear, and will increase learning; a good man would go to heaven as fast as he can, not make an hard shift, but enter abundantly, 2 Pet. 1. 11.

bservat. 2.

2. To grow in faith is a means to persevere in faith. Man is of an active nature, either he groweth better, or worse; we shall not keep what we have received, if we do not labour to increase in it; as an house begun to be built goeth to decay, and dropeth down more and more if we do not go on to finish it; do we grow then, or decline? Did we observe our first coolings, the mischief

mischief would not be so great ; but we, like the hen, as long as there is one egg in the nest, observe not how many are taken away ; as long as we have any tolerable affections to the things of God, or somewhat to keep us alive, we do not consider how many degrees of grace we have lost.

Faith (take it for the grace) is the proper foundation of holiness *Observat. 3.* and good works. Works without faith are but a roof without a foundation ; and faith without works is a foundation without a building ; good fruit supposeth a good tree, *Mut. 7.*

The faith of Christians is a most holy faith ; no doctrine hath such pure precepts, such high examples, such raised motives, such mysterious enforcements, such blessed rewards, and all to encourage holiness ; if ever any thing were exactly fitted to its purpose, surely the Word is fitted to promote holiness ; the Precepts of the Law require it, the Doctrine of the Gospel sheweth where virtue and power is to be had to perform it, the promises encourage it, the examples of God and Christ shew the height and exactness of it, the examples of the Saints shew 'tis possible, the Word and Ordinances work it, as being instituted by God for such a purpose, and accompanied with his necessary grace, *Eph. 5. 26.* God hath reserved this honour of sanctifying the heart to the Doctrine of the Scriptures, to evidence their Divine original, *Jam. 1. 18.* He hath begotten us to himself, by the word of truth : this great change which is wrought in the heart of man, is by the Word ; a moral Lecture may a little fashion the outward man, and reduce him to a civil course ; as Xenocrates his moral Lecture made Polemo leave his vicious and sensual course of life ; but regeneration is only found in the School of Christ : Well then, if you will know the best Religion, observe where is there most holiness discovered and wrought, *Psal. 19. 7, 8, 9. Joh. 17. 17.* In the Word of God you have the copie of his holiness ; there is somewhat of good life and moral behaviour among the heathen, but nothing of regeneration and genuine holiness. Once more, An impure life will not suit with an holy faith : you dishonour God, and disparage your Religion when you walk as Heathens : This holy faith is best kept in a pure conscience, *2 Tim 3 9.*

From that [building up your selves,] In building up, that is, in *Observat. 5.* growth and perseverance, there is a concurrence of our own endeavours ; we are living stones, *1 Pet. 2. 4.* after we are converted,
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and are not altogether dead and passive, as in conversion; after we have received Christ we may walk with him, Col. 2.6. motion and operation followeth life; he that made thee without thee, will not save thee without thee.

Observ. 6. From the other interpretation of the word [*your selves*] that is, *one another*, Observe, *That mutual conference is a means of perseverance*: Solomon saith, Eccles. 4.10. *When two lye together they have heat*; surely good company preserveth and keepeth up our warmth and vigor; as a remedy against Apostacy, spiritual communion and conference is often pressed, see Heb. 3.13, & Heb. 10. 24, 25. When Gods people did ofner meet and confer together, there was more life in them.

Observat. 7. Next to conference, Prayer is required: Note thence, *That Prayer is a means of establishment*: We are kept by Gods power, and Gods power is let a work by prayer; that is the breath, that keepeth in the fire; men that neglect prayer find sensible decays; when they suspected some distemper upon Job's spirit, they charge him with the neglect of Prayer, Job 15.4. *Surely thou restrainest prayer*; no wonder if men grow unsavory, worldly, voluptuous, when they let days go, and weeks go, and God never heareth from them.

Observ. 8. 8. Then we pray aright, when we pray in the holy Ghost; this concurrence is necessary both with respect to *acceptance* and *assistance*.

1. With respect to acceptance: God will own nothing in prayer but what cometh from his Spirit; any other voice is strange and barbarous to him, Rom 8.27. *He knoweth the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the Saints according to the will of God*; the Lord delighteth not in the flaunting prayers, and the unsavoury belches and eruptions of a humane spirit; the tuneable cadency of words is but an empty ring in Gods ears; the Psalmist saith, Psal. 19.2. *Let my prayer be set forth before thee as incense*: Now the Censers were to be kindled with holy fire before the smoak went up; the coal wherewith we are kindled must be taken from the Altar, not from a common hearth, and then our prayer goeth up as incense: Gods course is to prepare the heart, and then to grant the request, Psal. 10.17. *Thou wilt prepare their hearts, and cause thine ear to hear*; surely Gods ear will be opened if our hearts be opened; when he himself sets us a work

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we need not doubt of audience; *fire from Heaven* to consume the sacrifice was the solemn token of acceptance heretofore; *fire from Heaven* is the token still, even an holy ardour wrought in us by the Spirit.

2. In point of assistance: Prayer is a work too hard for us; we can babble of our selves, but we cannot pray without the holy Ghost; we can put words into prayer, but 'tis the Spirit puts *affections*, without which 'tis but a little cold prattle, and *spiritless talk*; our necessities may *sharpen* our prayers, but they cannot *enliven* our prayers; a carnal man may feel the impulsions of a *natural fervency*, and so cry unto God as the *young Ravens* cry unto him; and in all creatures there is a desire of *relief*; the rude Mariners in the Tempest were very earnest, *Jonah* 1.6. But now *gracious affection* is quite another thing than this *natural fervency*; there may be cold and *raw wishes* after grace, but not *serious volitions* and *spiritual desires*, these we must have from the holy Ghost; surely if we did consider what prayer is, we should see the need of this assistance; 'tis a work which will cost us travel of heart, *Act* 1.14. *προκατρίβοντες ἐν τῇ προσεύχῃ*; and *Jam.* 5.16. *δοῦναι ἐνπροϋχθῆναι*, 'tis expressed by *striving*, *Rom.* 15. 30. *Strive with me in prayers*; and *Col.* 4.12. *Labouring for you fervently in prayers, &c.* *ἀγωνίζομαι*; 'tis a striving with God himself; and then there is no setting upon God but by his own strength; this was figured in *Jacobs wrestling*, *Gen.* 32.25. to the end; which is explained, *Hos.* 12.4. *Yea, he had power over the Angel and prevailed; yea, he wept and made supplication*; the party that *Jacob* wrestled with is called a man, an Angel, and God; a man, for the shape and form assumed; an Angel, to note the second Person, who is the Messenger of the Covenant, and God, *Gen.* 32.30. 'Twas such an Angel as blessed him, which is proper to God; now in the assumed body *Jacob* wrestled with him, which was symbolical; the Prophet referreth it to his Prayers; but how is it said, *He could not prevail against Jacob*? With a blast of his mouth he might have confounded him; and it had been as easie for him to maim and destroy every joyn, as to make him halt and lame of one thigh. I Answer, He could not, because he would not; he gave out but such a measure of strength to the body assumed; and the Lord did wrestle both in and against *Jacob*; in *Jacobo Deus est scilicet fortior*; he wrestleth against us with

his left hand, and strengtheneth us with his right ; so that Gods power prevaileth over himself ; all this is spoken to shew what need we have of a divine power , when we strive with God.

But now, what is it *to pray in the Holy Ghost* ? I shall answer it in a word ; the Spirit helpeth us in prayer, in a way of *gifts* or *graces* ; in a way of *gifts*, that the heart may not be bound up, and that we may have necessary words to give vent to affections : *Adam* maimed us both as to *gifts*, as well as *graces* ; and therefore that our supplies in *Christ* may be answerable, the Spirit bestoweth upon us the *gift of prayer*, that we may enlarge our selves to God on all occasions ; this gift was either *extraordinary*, and proper to the first times of the Gospel, when they were able of a sudden to dictate a prayer in a strange Language which they had never learned ; so 'tis said *1 Cor. 14. 15. I will pray with the Spirit, and with understanding also* : Many did pray with the Spirit, that is, made use of this gift, but to the neglect of edifying ; they did not pray so as they might be understood by the Hearers : Now saith the Apostle, I would use the gift, but to edification, so as the understanding of the Auditory may goe along with me.

2. The *ordinary gift of the Spirit*, is, that special dexterity whereby men are able to put their meaning into apt words ; 'tis not of such a miraculous infusion, and so wonderful in its self, as the former, because it dependeth much upon the temper and suitable constitution of the body, and is much bettered by industry, hearing, reading, meditation, conference, &c. as all other ordinary habits are : but such a gift there is in the Church, as we find by plain experience, many mens tongues being as the *pen of a ready Writer*, *Psal. 45. 1.* All miraculous gifts are now turned into ordinary gifts somewhat like them ; as *discerning of spirits* into a *sagacity* and *cantelous prudence*, gifts of tongues into a special dexterity that way, and *gifts of healing* into skill in *physick* ; so *praying with the Spirit* into readines of utterance and freedom of speech : Now though we are to covet the best gifts and strive after them, yet we must be contented with our measures : Sometimes this gift is given to carnal men, because of their service in the Church ; gifts are for the body, they may have great abilities to pray and preach, and may be carried on with full gales of out-ward

ward assistance : Usually 'tis given unto men according to their constitution and *natural receptivity*, all cannot expect a like quickness and enlargement of speech ; in the Pen-men of Scripture you may observe a difference of character and stile, according to their temper and education, though their assistance as to words was also infallible : *Isaiah* writeth in a *courtly stile*, and *Jeremiah* in a *priestly*, and *Amos* his manner of speech relisheth of his calling ; in the new Testament *John* is *Scraphical*, *Paul* *argumentative*, and *Peter* writeth in a *milky, sweet, middle-way*, &c.

2. There is the gracious assistance of the holy Ghost ; now this is either *Habitual*, or *Actual*.

1. Habitual grace is necessary to prayer, *Zeck. 12. 10. I will pour upon them a Spirit of grace and supplications* ; where there is grace there will be *supplications*, as soon as we are new born we fall a crying : *Behold he prayeth*, *Acts 9. 11.* is the first news we hear of *Paul* after his conversion ; prayer is a kindly duty to the the new creature ; things of an airy fiery nature, a little thing will carry them upward ; 'tis their natural motion and tendency : the regenerate are easily drawn into Gods presence, 'tis the venter and utterance by which we discover the impression that is upon us ; the Priests were to wash in the *great lavour*, before they went to the Altar ; we are washed in the *lavour of regeneration*, and renewed by the holy Ghost, and so made fit to offer spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. Tit. 3. 5.

2. There is *actual help and assistance* which we have from the Spirit ; though a man be regenerate, yet he cannot pray as he ought unless he be still moved and assisted by the holy Ghost ; this is continual, for we soon work out the strength which we have received : Now these *actual motions* do either concern the time of prayer, or the matter, and the manner of it. 1. The time of prayer, the Spirit suggesteth the fittest seasons ; he that searcheth out the deep things of God, knoweth the acceptable times, *Psal. 32. 6.* and accordingly 'giveth notice to the heart, by setting it awork in serious addresses to God, *Psal. 27. 8. Thou saidst, seek ye my face ; and my heart said, thy face Lord will I seek ;* God speaketh to us by holy motions, and the impulsions of his grace ; and we answer God by a ready obedience ; 'tis the worst scorn we can put upon one whom we hate, when we deny

to speak with him when he sendeth for us; by these motions we are invited to come and confer with God; do not say, *I am not at leisure*; I would not have this interpreted, as if every motion to prayer were from the Spirit; 'tis possible Satan may oppress an anxious soul with the tyranny of unreasonable impulsions to duty; I only understand such motions as are regular and according to the word; neither would I again be so understood, as if God were never to be called upon; or we were never to pray but when the Spirit moveth us; that's one of the carnal fancies of many wretches now; no, no, God must have his daily acknowledgement, *give us this day our daily bread*; but my meaning is, that such a season, when we are so strongly moved by the Spirit of God, should not be neglected.

2. Thy master of prayer is suggested by the holy Ghost; let a man alone, and he will soon run into a temptation, and cry for that which it were cruelty in God to give him; therefore the direction of the holy Ghost is necessary, that we may not ask a scorpion instead of a fish, and a stone instead of bread, Rom. 8. 27. *He maketh intercession for the Saints, according to the will of God.* We take counsel of our lusts and interests when we are left to our own private spirit; and so would have God to be a Minister of our carnal desires, and would engage him in our quarrels and private revenges: or else ask meat for our lusts; now the holy Ghost teacheth us to ask not only what is lawful, but what is expedient for us; that so the will of God may take place before our inclinations.

3. For the manner in every moral action; the manner of working is a chief circumstance; a man may sin in doing good, but not in doing well: now in prayer where we have immediately to do with God, we should take great heed in what manner we come to him; the right manner is when we come with affection, with confidence, with reverence.

1. With affection, 'tis the holy Ghost sets us a groaning, Rom. 8. 26. *He maketh intercession for the Saints with such sighs and groans as cannot be uttered*; words are but the outside of prayer, sighs and groans are the language which God will understand; and these are the prayers which the holy Ghost maketh for us, and in us; we learn to mourn from the Turtle, from him that descended in the form of a Dove, he draweth sighs from the heart

heart and tears from the eyes; parts may furnish us with eloquence, but the Spirit giveth affection, that earnest reaching forth of soul, that holy importunity, that spiritual violence, 'tis all of his working; many a prayer is neatly ordered, and tunably delivered; but this arrifce of words smelleth of the man: then it favoureth of the holy Ghost. when there is life and power in it; and the poor supplicant sets himself to wrestle with God, as if he would overcome him by his own strength.

2. With *confidence*, when we come in a child-like manner and call God *Father*, Rom. 8. 16. *We have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry Abba Father*: Usually we do not mind this part of the Spirits help in Prayer; we look to gifts and enlargements, but not to this *child-like confidence*, that we may be able to call God *Father* without blasphemy and reproach; 'tis an easie matter to language it with our mouths; but to have the sense of our adoption in our hearts is a difficult thing; sometimes the Spirit witnesseth it more explicitly by *expressions*; as if it were said, when we go to prayer, Be of good cheer, thy sins are pardoned; God is thy God: at other times by impressions, or more secret instincts, if not by working *child-like confidence*, yet *child-like assidum*; *optando si non affirmando*, that we may call God Father by *option* and *choice*, if not by *direct affirmation*, or a clear sense of our adoption.

3. With *reverence*, that we may be serious and awful: God is best seen in the light of his own Spirit; the Heathens could say, *Non loquendum de Deo sine lumine*, we need light from God when we come to speak of, or to God. That sense of the Lords greatness, and those fresh and awful thoughts that we have of his Majesty in prayer, they are stirred up in us by the holy Ghost; he uniteth and gathereth our hearts together, that they may not be ravelled and flittered abroad by impertinent and vain thoughts, Ps. 86. 11. Leave men to themselves, and they will do as foolishly as a man that is to gather a Posie for his friend, and filleth it fuller of stinking weeds than flowers; we shall mingle many unfavoury worldly thoughts, or deal as basely and affrontingly with God, as if a man under the Law should mingle Sulphure and Brimstone with the sweet perfumes that were in the Censer; lust will be interposing in prayer, and out-talking grace; therefore that we may be reverend and heedful, we must use the help of

of the Spirit, *praying in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance*, Eph. 6. 18.

Well then, when thou goest to prayer look upon the Holy Ghost, as appointed by the Father, and purchased by the Son to help thee in this sweet and comfortable service, Rom. 8. 26. *The Spirit helpeth our infirmities*, *συναρτιάζειν*, goeth to the other end of the staff and beareth a part of the burden; we are tugging and wrestling at it, and can make no work of it; but the Spirit cometh and puts under his shoulder, and then it cometh off kindly.

2. It informeth us how much they sin that are so far from praying with the Holy Ghost, that they do not pray with their *own spirit*; alas, this is but babbling when the heart doth not go along with the lips.

3. It informeth us of the priviledges of the Saints, God is their *Father*, willing to hear prayers; Christ is their *advocate*, willing to present their requests in Court; and the Spirit a *Notary*, to indite and draw up their requests for them: oh what encouragement have we to go to the throne of Grace! Surely we do not improve our priviledges, or else we might have more comfortable access to the Father through Christ by the Spirit, Ephes. 2. 18.

VERSE XXI.

Keep your selves in the Love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, unto eternal life.

THe Apostle goeth on, directing to the means of perseverance; as before he mentioned two duties, Conference and Prayer, so here two graces, *Love and Hope*.

[*Keep your selves*] that is, use the means, *we are kept by the power of God unto Salvation*; but because of the concurrence of our endeavours, 'tis ascribed to us [*your selves*] Some interpret it, as before, *alii alios*, keep one another, [*In the Love of God*] it may be taken for that love which God beareth to us; or else
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for the Love wherewith we love God, which is fitly called the Love of God; partly because God is the object of it; partly because the Author of it; he commandeth, or begetteth it, increaseth it, perfecteth it in the soul: In this second sense I take the love of God here; namely, for that grace wrought in us; and the great work committed to our care is to keep it, increase it, and discover it in all the operations of it: [*looking,*] the formal act of hope, [*for the mercy,*] the cause is put for the effect; for all that good which we shall receive at Christs coming; 'tis called mercy, because his proceeding with the Elect at the last day will be upon terms of Grace: [*of our Lord Jesus Christ,*] 'tis so called, because 'tis purchased by Christ, and dispensed by him, *Joh. 17.2. he hath power to give eternal life*; and at his coming he introduceth his people into their happy estate, *Joh. 14.3. [unto everlasting life,] our happiness in heaven is sometimes called everlasting life, at other times everlasting glory.*

Observe hence, 1. In perseverance there is a concurrence of our *Observ. 1.* care and diligence, *Phil. 2.12,13. Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for, &c.* The main work is Gods; he that hath begun a good work must perfect it, *Phil. 1.6.* and the same Jesus that is author, is also finisher, *Heb. 12.2.* the deeper radication of the habit, the defence of it, the growth and perfection of it, the ability to act, is all from God, *1 Pet. 5.10. The God of all grace make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, and settle you*; but yet a concurrence there is of our care and endeavours; a child in the womb is nourished by the mother, liveth by the life of the mother, feedeth by the food of the mother, but a child born liveth a more distinct and separate life of his own, though it still be under the mothers care and provision: so 'tis with us after grace received, we have a power to act and do what is necessary for the preservation of the spiritual life: Well then, let us not neglect the means; you must not lye upon the bed of ease, and think that God must do all; he doth all indeed, but in us and by us. Idle wishes will do us no good as long as our hands refuse to labour.

Again, Men that have grace had need look to the keeping of it. *Observat. 2.* Why? first we our selves are prone to revolt; *this people loveth to wander, and they erre in their hearts*, though under the immediate conduct of God: 'Tis notable in Scripture, that we read of a decay both of faith, love, and obedience, which are the three main

*Jer. 14.10.
Psal 95.10.*

main graces; some that *left their first faith*, 1 Tim. 5. 12. others that *left their first love*, Rev. 2. 4. and as to *obedience*, we read of the *first ways of David*, as distinguished from his latter, 2 Chron. 17. 3. *He walked in the first ways of his father David*; David in his latter time fell into scandalous crimes.

2. We are assaulted with *continual temptations*: an importunate *suit*, by perseverance in his *suit*, may at length prevail; Satan will lose nothing for want of asking; those that refused at first may yield afterwards: Long conversing with the world may taint the spirit; a deformed object, when we are used to it, seemeth less deformed; in-dwelling lust, though long restrained, breaketh out afterward with the more violence: Rose-trees snipt in *June* bear in the Winter; many that in youth have held an hard hand over sin, in their very old age have found their lusts more violent.

3. A man of long standing is apt to grow secure and negligent, as if he were now past danger; when his condition was doubtfull he seemed to be more diligent and serious; but when the labours and difficulties of our first entering into favour with God are well over, and a man hath gotten some freedom from the terrors of the Law, and some peace and confidence, he is in danger of security, by which all runneth to waste in the soul, see Rev. 3. 17, 18, 19. Well then, this life is never exempted from care, either to *get grace*, or to *keep it*; we need to be watchfull and diligent to the very last; man is a changeable creature, and Satan is restless; either he continueth the old *suit*, or *altereth the course of temptations*; 'tis his subtilty in that he doth not always play the same game; a man may stand one brunt and fail in another: *Joab turned after Adonijah*, though not after *Absalom*, 1 Kings 2. 28. every new condition bringeth new snares; *Ephraim is a cake not turned*, Hos. 7. 8. A man may be well baked of one side, and yet quite dough of another; the children of God prosperous, differ from the children of God afflicted, Phil. 4. 12. we had need to learn how to walk up hill and down hill, that we may keep with God upon all grounds. Again, Corruptions may be disguised; a man may withstand open enemies, and yet fall by the insinuations of those that have a shew of goodness; the young Prophet withstood the King stoutly, but yet was perverted by the insinuations of the old Prophet, 1 Kings 13. 4. with ver. 19.

Meletius,

Meletius, a sufferer under Pagans, but went over to the *Arrians*.

Again, Where there seemeth to be least danger, there is most cause of fear. *Lot*, that was chaste in *Sodom*, miscarried in the *mountains*, where there were none but his own family: Conscience, that is now tender, may be strangely deadened and laid by for a time. Who would have thought that he whose heart smote him for cutting off the lap of *Sauls* garment, should afterwards fall into uncleanness and blood, and lye asleep in it for a long time? Confidence is sure to be dismounted; *Peter* is a sad instance; he told his Master, *If all men deny thee, yet not I*; and he meant as he spoke; he ventureth on a band of men with a rusty blade, followeth Christ into the High Priests Hall; who more secure than *Peter*? but all this confidence failed, though it met but with a weak tryal, the soft words of a *Damsels* question; such feathers are we when the blast of a temptation is let loose upon us. Upon all these considerations now let us make it our care to keep what graces we have gotten, which will never be done without watchfulness and diligence. To quicken you further to it,

1. Unless you keep it *all is in vain, if so be it be in vain*: Gal. 3.4. 'tis in vain, as to the final reward; 'tis not in vain, as to the increase of punishment; you will lose all your cost you have been at for Christ, Ezek. 18.24. 2 Job. 8. your watchings, strivings, prayings, sufferings, come to nothing; the Nazarite was to begin all anew if the days of his separation were defiled, Numb. 6. 12. nay, 'tis not in vain as to punishment, 2 Pet. 2.20, 21, 22.

2. To lose any degrees of grace is a great loss; 'tis the most precious gift, 2 Pet. 1.1. conduceth to the highest end, eternal happiness, fitteth us for communion with God; all the world cannot repair this loss, or purchase a supply for us; we are to be accountable for degrees, as well as for the grace it self; they that had *five talents* reckoned for five; a Factor that giveth an account only for a part of the Estate received, is not accounted faithful; we may not be intrusted with so much again: a man that hath fallen may recover his peace and joy, but in a lower degree: a Prodigal that hath once broken is not trusted with a like stock again; and a man after a great disease may never come to the same degree and pitch of health; so Christians may not re-

cover that largeness of Spirit after their soul falls and fulness of inward strength and comfort.

3. Those that have made profession of Love to God, and yet afterwards break with him, bring an ill report upon the Lord, as if he were an ill Master: I am perswaded that the Devil in policy lets many men alone for a while to make a strict profession, and seem to be full of zeal and holiness; that they may afterwards do Religion a mischief, whilst they act for God, though they do some things excellently; Satan never troubleth them, he is at truce with them, till they have gotten a name for the profession of godliness and strictness of conversation; and when once they have gotten a name, their fall will be more scandalous, more ignominious to themselves, and disgraceful to Religion; verily this is a common experience; we see many forward, hot, and carried out with great impulsions of zeal; and all this while Satan lets them alone, he knoweth how mutable men are, and how soon they begin to tire in the ways of God; therefore lets them alone till they have run themselves out of breath, that afterward by a more notable defection they may shame themselves, and harden others: If *Judas* will be a Disciple, he lets him alone; if *Simon Magus* will be baptized, and *Nicholas* bear Office in the Church, he lets them alone; he knoweth the best are mutable, that many take up their Religion out of interest, that men are soon weary of their own scrupulousness and rigid observances, that they first make Conscience of all things, and then of nothing, and therefore he lets them go on without any notable defect or failing, to fly some youthful lusts, to renounce some interests, till they have gotten credit enough to discredit Religion; see 2 *Tim.* 2. 18. Oh Christians, if you are not moved with respect to God; yet for your own cause, after a blaze will you go out in a stench? an house begun and not finished is an habitation for Screech-Owls; but on the contrary, what an honour is it to hold out to the last, to be like *Manson*, an old Disciple?

4. The worst is past, we have but a few years service more, and we shall be happy for ever; *Your salvation is never then in us when you first believed, Rom. 13. 11.* a little more, and you will land safe at the expected Haven; if we have a rough passage, 'tis a short one; *What, will you not watch with me one hour?* saith Christ to his Apostles: the longest life is no more in comparison

of eternity. *Enoch* lived longer then most men do, he lived 365. years, *Gen.* 5. 22. but all that while *he walked with God*; and is it so tedious to us to tell over a few Summers and Winters before we come to Heaven?

The next Point is more particular and expresse: *That of all Observat. 2. graces, Love needeth keeping*: Why? 1. Because, of all graces 'tis most decaying, *Mit.* 24. 12. *Rev.* 2. 4. Flame is soon spent, graces that act most strongly require most influence, as being most subject to abatement; we sooner lose our affections then any thing else. 2. Because love is a grace that we can ill spare, 'tis the spring and rise of all duties to *God* and *Man*. 1. To *God*, love is the first affection corrupted and renewed; the Schoolmen dispute whether there be any thing a man doth that had not its first rise from love; 'tis love maketh us *angry*, and 'tis love maketh us * *hate*, and * love maketh us *grieve*, much more is it love * *that maketh us hope and desire, and delight*; so 'tis gracious * love * *that sets us a mourning for sin, puts us upon hatred of evil, delight*; 6. *ing in God and in his Laws*, see 2 *Cor.* 4. 14. 1 *Joh.* 5. 3. *Gal.* 5. * *Luke* 7. 47. 6. *Faith worketh by love, faith receiveth grace, and love exerciseth it*; if we would do any thing in the resistance of *sin*, in keeping the *Commandments*, we cannot spare our love. 2. As to *man*, love is a grace that will make us industrious for the good of others; and therefore we read of the *labour of love*, 1 *Thes.* 1. 3. 'tis *gluten univ. rum*, the glue of the souls, the *cement*, and *soder* of the *Church*; the joynting that runneth throughout all the living and squared stones, *Col.* 3. 14. by this souls are mingled, and all mutual offices done cheerfully: want of love to the *Saints* is the cause of *Apostacy*; for the less we love them, the more we associate to the wicked, and then zeal is damnified and abated.

Well then, watch the more earnestly against these decays and abatements of love; *leaving our first love* is a disease not only incident to *Hypocrites*, but sometimes to *God's own children*; Christians go backward in the heat and light of their graces ten degrees, either through the *badness of the times*, *Mit.* 24. 12. or through a *curst society* that is apt to creep upon us, affections are decayed to things to which we are accustomed; the *Israelites* cryed out, *nothing but this Manna*; our desires are not so fresh and lively after long acquaintance: Sometimes it cometh from negli-

gence, or a sluggish carelessness, we do not take pains to keep graces alive, ἀναζωοποιῶν, stir up the gift that is in us, 2 Tim. 1. 6. as the Priests in the Temple were to keep in the holy fire; so are we by prayers, and meditation, and constant work, to keep our love alive; but when these exercises are neglected, it decreaseth: Sometimes it falleth out through freeness in sinning; neglect is like not blowing up the coals; sinning is like pouring on waters, a very quenching of the Spirit, 1 Thes. 5. 13. Again, through secure dalliance with the pleasures of sin, or cumbring the soul with the cares of the world; when the heart runneth out too much upon the creature, God is neglected; Thus it may fall out.

But now the decay of love is seen in two things. 1. The remission of the degrees of love. 2. The intermission of the acts of love.

1. A remission of the degrees, when the heart groweth cold, listless, and loose; when there is not such a strong tendency and bent of soul towards God as formerly, not such a sense of unkindness, such an awful respect to God, a care to please him, and desire to enjoy him; nor such complacency and delight in the thoughts of God; but now every loss or abatement of degrees doth not mount to a leaving of our first love; there are certain ravishments and transports of soul, which we feel upon the first evidence of our being reconciled to God, or are stirred up upon other special occasions; these are accidental overflowings, which may come and go; we cannot always bear up under them; new things strangely affect us, love is afterward more settled and diffused in the channels of obedience; and therefore no wonder if it do not run with so full a tide and current; this remission of degrees then must be understood with respect to these constant dispositions of love, as care to please, fear to offend, desire of, and delight in God; when these fail as to any degree, love is a chilling or growing cold.

2. An intermission of the acts and exercise of love, when God is forgotten, duty neglected, sin unmortified, no care of, or frequency in private communion with God, no sweet thoughts of him, Psa. 63. 6. Psal. 104. 34. where we love there will be musing on the object beloved; there will be familiarity and intimateness of converse; there is not a day can pass, but love will find some errand and occasion to confer with God, either to implore his help, or ask
his

his counsel; but now when men can pass over whole days and weeks, and never give God a visit, such strangeness argueth little love: Again, when there is no care of glorifying God, no plottings and contrivings how we may be most useful for him; when we do not mourn over sin as we were wont to do, are not so sensible of offences, have not these meltings of heart, are not so careful to avoid all occasions of offending God, are not so watchful, so zealous as we were wont to be, do not rise up in arms against *temptations* and *carnal thoughts*, love is decayed; certainly, when the sense of our obligations to Christ is warm upon the heart, sin doth not scape so freely, love will not endure it to live and act in the heart, *Tit. 2. 11. 12. Gen. 39. 9.* but now as this is worn off, the heart is not watched; the tongue is not bridled, *speeches* are idle, yea rotten and profane, *wrath* and *envy* tyrannize over the Soul, all runneth to riot in the poor neglected heart; yea further, Gods *publick worship* is performed *perfunctorily*, and in a *careless stupid manner*, sin confessed without remorse and sense of the wrong done to God; prayer made for spiritual blessings without desire of obtaining; *wrath* deprecated without any fear of the danger; *intercession* for others, without any sympathy or brotherly Love; thanks given, without any esteem of the benefits, or affection to God, in the remembrance of them; conference of holy things is either none at all, or very sleight and careless; bearing, without attention; reading without a desire of profit; singing without any delight or melody of heart. All this is but the just account of an heart declining in the love of God.

Now, as you love your own Souls, beware of this great evil; to this end. 1. Be rooted and grounded in love, *Eph. 3. 17.* Do not content your selves with flashes and good moods, and meltings at a Sermon; but get solid grace and thorow experiences; glances and suddain affections will come to nothing, *Mat. 13. 4. 5,* with 20, 21. A tree that hath taken root is in less danger of withering.

2. Increase and grow in love, *1 Thes. 4. 10.* Nothing conduceth to a decay, more than contentment with what we have received; every day you should love sin less, self less, world less, but Christ more and more.

3. Observe the first declinings, for these are cause of all the rest, evil is best stopped in the beginning; if when we first began

to grow careless, we had taken heed, then it would never have come to this; an *heavy body* moving downward *vires acquirit cundo*, it gathers strength by running, and still moveth faster and faster; look then to your first breaking off from God, and *remitting your watch and spiritual fervour*; 'tis easier to crush the egg than to kill the serpent: He that keepeth an house in constant repair prevents the ruine and fall of it, stop every hole and chink before the mischief spread further.

4. *Plead with thy heart*; the highest degree of love doth not answer the *dignity of Christ*, nor the *duty* that we owe to him; he is to be loved *with all the Soul, and all the heart, and all the might*; 'tis a disgrace to him to give him less; surely he looketh to be much loved again who hath loved us so intirely, and *translated us out of darkness into his marvelous light*.

5. In case of decay, take the advice which the holy Ghost hath given you, *Rev. 2. 5.* where three things are required; 1. *Consideration.* 2. *Humiliation.* 3. *Reformation.*

1. *Consideration*, Remember *whence thou art fallen*, ponder the case; in examination we compare *our selves and the Law* together; but in this recollection, *our selves and our selves* together; sadly consider then what a difference there is between thee and thy self, recall former experiences, and say, as *Job 29. 2, 3.* *Oh that I were as in months past, in the days when God preserved me, when his candle shined on my head*; or as the Church, *Hos. 2. 7.* *It was better with me than now*; in our serious sequestration and retirements we should have such thoughts as these are, *I was wont to spend some time every day with God, I remember when 'twas a delight to me to think of him*; now I have no heart to pray or meditate; *no relish of communion with his blessed majesty*; 'twas the joy of my Soul to be at an Ordinance, the returns of the Sabbath were welcome to me; but now what a weariness is it! *time was when I had sweet experiences, and the graces of Gods Spirit were more lively in me, but now all is dead and inefficacious*; *time was when a vain thought was burdensome unto me, but now I can away with sinful actions*; *time was when the misspence of ordinary time was a grief unto my Soul, now I can spend the Sabbath unprofitably and never be troubled, &c.* Thus should you consider your estate.

2. *Humiliation*, intimated in the word *repent*; 'tis not enough to know your selves fallen; many are convinced of their *collapsed* and

and decayed estate, but do not judge themselves for it in Gods presence; go bewail it to God; smite upon the thigh, praying for pardon; that's the notion of the word [*repent*] here; 'tis not enough to repent of *gross whoredom, theft, drunkenness*; we must repent also of the decays of love; the blind world thinketh we are to repent of nothing but what is publickly odious: In friendship *coldness* is taken for a great injury; go arraign thy self before God for growing cold in his Love and Service.

3. *Reformation; do thy first works*; we must not spend the time in idle complaints; many are sensible, that do not repent; some may repent that do not reform; you must not be quiet till you recover your former station: Christ put Peter upon a *trebble* profession, because of his *trebble denyal*, John 21. 17.

The next Note is from the coupling of these two, the love of God, and looking for the mercy of Christ unto eternal life: Thence Observe, That love to God will put us upon looking for Christs second coming, when this mercy is to be dispensed to us. See the like connection elsewhere, 2 Ths. 3. 5. The Lord direct your hearts to the Love of God, and the patient waiting for Christ. Two reasons may be given of it.

1. Love allayeth fear, 1 Joh. 4. 17, 18. of whom should a Christian be afraid at that day? of the Devil? he is held in chains of darkness, and judged by the Saints together with Christ: of Christ? Shall the members be afraid of their head? the ransomed, of their Redeemer? the beloved of their Saviour? Oh but then he cometh as a Judge, but 'tis to plead their cause, to right their wrongs, to revenge their enemies, to reward their services; if he be then your Judge he hath ever been your Advocate hitherto, and surely he that hath interceded for you, will not condemn you.

2. Love quickeneth desire, 2 Pet. 3. 12. Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the Lord, see Cant. 8. 14 Rev. 22. 20. An Harlot would have her husband deferre his coming, but a chaste spouse thinketh he can never come soon enough, they that go an whoring after the world, neither desire Christs coming, nor love his appearing; but the Spirit of the Bride saith, Come; they that love God look for it, Phil. 3. 20. long for it, 2 Tim. 4. 8. they love his appearing; corrupt nature saith, Depart, Job 22. 14. but grace saith, Come: the children of God would fain see him of whom they have

have heard so often, and so much, and of whose sweetness they have tasted; they know him by *hear-say*, and by *spiritual experience*, but they would fain see his person.

This now informeth us what a difference there is between a child of God and wicked men; they with this day would never come, and would be glad in their hearts to hear such news; the thought of Christs coming is their burden and torment; they have the *spirit of the devil* in them, *Art thou come to torment us before our time*, Mat. 8. 31. They cannot endure to hear or think of it; if it might go by voices whether Christ should come or no, would they give their voice this way, and say, *Come Lord Jesus, yea, come quickly?* If Thieves and Malefactors should have the liberty to chuse whether the Assizes should be kept or no, would they ever fix it? and look for, and long for the time of its approach? No, no; but a child of God is *waiting* and *looking* for this happy time.

But now here is an Objection; are Christians always in this frame? What shall we say then to those weak ones that *tremble at the thought of it*, for want of the assurance of Gods Love? and the best Saints, that do not always feel such an *actual inclination and strength of desire*?

I Answer, The meanest Saint hath some inclination this way; Can a man desire that Christ should come into his heart, and not come to Judgment? Since comfort and reward is more naturally embraced than *duy*, the first work of grace is to raise us up to this hope, 1 Pet. 1. 3. but yet sometimes there may be a *drowsiness* and *indisposition*, and then their lamps *may not be kept burning*, Luke 12. 35, 36. The wise Virgins *slept* as well as the foolish, Mat. 25. Oftentimes they find themselves indisposed for his coming, by careless carriage, remission of their watch, and scattering their love to the Creature; yea, much of their *old bondage* may remain, through the imperfection of their love; for his *perfect love casteth out fear*: A wife desireth her husbands coming home; but it may be all things are not ready, and in so good order as they should be: all Christians desire the coming of Christ; but sometimes they are not so exact and watchfull, and therefore their affections are not so lively.

Here is a *note of tryal* whether we love God or Christ; how do we stand affected towards his appearing? The world cannot satisfy

facious Christians, they look beyond it ; in things to come we are apt to feign ; and because we have not a *sufficient sense* of them, we think we have an *affection* to them, when we have them not, if there be *looking*, there will be *preparing* ; when you expect a great estate for your Children, you breed them accordingly ; or rather thus ; a man that expecteth the coming of a King to his house will make all things ready ; surely you look for no body, when you are not fitting and preparing your selves ; what have you done against this great day ? do you *judge your selves* ? 1 Cor. 11. 31. do you get into Christ ? Rom. 8. 1. that you may be interessed in *Christs Righteousness* against you come to undergo *Christs judgement* ? what purging of heart and life ? 2 Pet 3. 11. art thou in such a case wherein thou wouldst be found of Christ ?

To exhort those that love God to look earnestly for the coming of Christ, to this end. 1. Consider *our relations* to him, he is our *Master*, we are his *servants*, and good servants *will wait for their Masters coming*, Mat. 24. 45. here we have our *meals*, but then our *wages* ; 'tis but *present maintenance* which we have now, but *behold I come, and my reward is with me*, Christ will not come empty-handed : Again, he is our *Husband*, we his *Spouse*, the *Bride saith come*, Rev. 22. 17. we are now but *contracted* to Christ, then is the day of *solemn Espousals* : The *judge* is the wicked mens *enemy*, but your *Redeemer*. 2. Consider the privilege we shall then enjoy ; the day of Christs coming is :

1. *A day of manifestation*, Rom. 8. 19. all is now hidden, Christ is hidden, the *Saints* are hidden, their life is hidden, Col. 3. 3. their *glory* is hidden, 1 Job. 3. 2. but then Christ shall appear, and we shall appear with him in *Glory*, as *Moses* told the *Rebels*, Numb. 16. *To morrow the Lord will show who are his* ; Christ as the *natural son* shall then appear in all his *Royalty and Glory*, as the *great God and Saviour of the world* ; so shall the *Saints* put on their *best Robes* ; in *Winter* the tree appeareth not what it is, the *sap and life* is hidden in the root, but when *summer* cometh, all is discovered.

2. 'Tis a *day of perfection*, every thing tendeth to its perfect estate ; the *little seed* that is sown in the ground, breaketh through the clods that it may be in *flower and perfection* ; so a Christian is working through, that he may come to an estate of

perfect holiness, and perfect freedom; here we are very weak; yea even to glorified spirits he is but a *Saviour in part*, there is some fruit of sin continued upon the body, but then *body and soul* are united and perfectly glorified, to praise God in Heaven; Christ cometh to make an end of what he hath begun; he came first to *redeem our souls from sin*, but then *our bodies from corruption*; then all privileges are perfect *regeneration*, *Mat. 19. 27.* when Heaven's new, earth new, bodies new, souls new, that's a regeneration indeed; so *adoption*, we are *sons*; but handled as *servants*, *looking for the adoption*, *Rom. 8. 23.* so *justification*, our pardon shall be proclaimed at the *Market Cross*, published before all the world, *Acts 3. 19.* so for *Redemption*, *Luke 21. 28.* the body is a *cap-tive*, when the soul is at liberty, the body is held under death till that day.

3. 'Tis a *day of Congregation*, or gathering together; the Saints are now scattered, they live in *divers Countries*, and in *divers Ages*; but then all meet in one Assembly and Congregation, *Psal. 1. 6.* but of these things more largely, verse 16. on these words [*the great day.*]

Observat. 5. From that [*looking for the mercy, &c.*] Observe, That *looking earnestly for eternal life is a good means of perseverance*; for to that end it is urged by the Apostle here. I shall enquire
1. What this looking is. 2. What influence it hath upon our perseverance.

1. What this looking is; it implyeth *Patience*; but chiefly *Hope*.

1. *Patience*, in waiting Gods leisure in the midst of present difficulties, *Heb. 10. 36.* *Luke 8. 15.* *1 Thess. 1. 3.* *Rom. 8. 25.*

2. *Hope*, Now because there is a *blind Hope*, and a *good Hope*, a *bastard Hope*, and a *genuine Hope*; good Hope through Grace, saith the Apostle, *2 Thes. 2. 16.* Let me tell you that this *looking* or *expectation* is not that *blind Hope* that is found in men ignorant and presumptuous, that regard not what they do; presumption is a *child of darkness*, the fruit of *ignorance and inconsideration*; when men are once serious they find it an hard matter to fix an *advised Hope* on things to come; for guilty nature is more inclinable to fear than hope; this blind hope will certainly fail us; 'tis compared to a *Spiders Web*, *Job. 8. 12, 13.* The Spider spineth a web out of his own bowels, which is swept away as soon

soon as the besom cometh ; so do carnal men conceive a few rash and ungrounded hopes ; but when *death* cometh, or a *little of conscience*, these vain conceits are swept away : this hope which I press you to is a *serious act* rising from grace, aiming at its own perfection : again, this *looking* is not *some glances* upon Heaven, such as are found in worldly and sensual persons, who now and then have their *lucida intervalla*, their *good moods* and *sober thoughts*, as *Balaam*, *Numb.* 23. 10. a *taste* they may have, *Heb.* 6. 4. a *smatch* of the sweetness of Heaven and spiritual comforts ; the most wretched wordlings have their wishes and sudden raptures of Soul : but alas, these *suddain motions* are not operative, they come but seldom, and leave no warmth upon the Soul ; as fruit is not ripened that hath but a glance of the Sun ; and a *suddain light* rather blindeth a man then sheweth him the way. So these suddain indeliberate thoughts vanish, and leave men never the better : again, 'tis not a *loose hope*, or a *probable conjecture* ; this hath no efficacy upon the Soul : men that are under an anxious doubtful posture of Spirit will be very uneven in their walkings, *Jam.* 1. 8. when men are discouraged in a race they begin to slacken their pace ; to which the Apostle alludeth when he saith, *I run not as one that is uncertain*, *1 Cor.* 9. 26. but when they begin sensibly to get ground, they hold on their course the more cheerfully.

Thus *negatively*, I have shewed you what 'tis not : but now *positively*, 'tis an earnest well grounded expectation of blessedness to come, it bewrayeth it self, 1. By frequent and serious thoughts ; thoughts are the *spies* and *messengers* of hope, it sendeth them into the *promised land* to bring the soul tidings from thence ; 'tis impossible a man can hope for a thing, but he will be thinking of it ; by this means we pre-occupy and forestal the contentment of what we expect, and least the soul with images and suppositions of what is to come, as if it were already present ; if a beggar were adopted into the succession of a Crown, he would please himself in imagining the happiness and honour, and pleasure of the Kingly State ; so certainly, if we did look upon our selves as *Heirs of the Kingdom of Heaven*, and *Co-heirs with Christ*, we would think of that happy state more then we do, and by a *serious Contemplation*, our hearts would carry us above the clouds, and set us in the midst of the glory of the world to come (as if we

did see Christ upon his Throne, and Paul with his Crown of righteousness upon his head, and all the blessed leaning in *Abrahams bosom*: a carnal expectation filleth men with carnal musings and projects, as *Luke 12. 18.* *διαλογιζετο*, he was dialoguing and discoursing with himself of pulling down Barns, and building greater, of bestowing his fruits and goods; see the like, *James 4. 13.* 'tis usual with men to forestall the pleasure of their hopes, as young riotous heirs spend upon their estates before they come in hand; now so it is also in Heavenly things; men that expect them will be entreating their spirits with the thoughts of them.

2. By hearty groans, and sighs, and longings, *Rom. 8. 23.* *We groan in ourselves, waiting for the Adoption, the Redemption of our bodies*; they have had a taste of the *Clusters of Canaan*, and therefore long for more; they can never be soon enough with Christ; when shall it once be, the nearer enjoyment, the more impatient of the want of his company; as the decayes of Nature do put them in mind of another world, they begin to lift up the head, and look out, *Rom. 8. 19* *ἀνασπασθεῖς ἄνω* the earnest expectation of the creature; the word signifieth the putting out of the head to see if it can spy a thing a great way off, and noteth the extension of the Soul towards the fruition of things hoped for; they would have a fuller draught of the consolations of the Spirit, more freedom from sin, more perfection of grace, &c.

John 3.

3. By lively tastes and feelings, a believer hath eternal life; he beginneth it here; hope is called a lively hope, not onely living, but lively, *1 Pet. 1. 3.* because it quickneth the heart, and maketh us chearful and sprightly, *Rom. 5. 2.* *We rejoyce under the hope of the glory of God*; joy is for enjoyment and possession; but yet that pre-possession which hope getteth causeth all joy, see *1 Pet. 1. 8.* I confess, all feel it not in a like degree, because it dependeth upon a sense of grace, which believers always have not; yet all find a sweetness and some comfort, when they think of what they look for: worldly hope is but the dream of a shadow; there is pain and trouble in the expectation, and no satisfaction in the fruition.

2. Let me shew you the influence it hath upon perseverance.
1. It sets us a work to purge out sin, *1 Joh. 3. 3.* *Everyone that hath*

hath this hope purifieth himself, as Christ is pure; the things that we look for are holy; 'tis a great part of our portion in Heaven, to be free from sin, and to be consorts of the immaculate Lamb; can we hope for these things, and cherish worldly lusts? if we did look for a sensual Paradise, then we might indulge our lusts without any defiance of our hopes: but we look for a pure and holy, as well as a glorious and blessed estate, and therefore we should begin to purifie our selves.

2. *It withdraweth our hearts from present things, Phil. 2: 20. Our conversation is in Heaven, from whence we look for a Saviour;* A man that hath been looking upon the Sun, findeth his eyes dazzled, that he cannot behold an object less glorious; the oftner we look within this veil, the more is the glory of the world obscured; *Abraham lived as a stranger in the promised land, why? because he looked for a City, &c. Heb. 11. 9, 10. Deny worldly lusts* (saith the Apostle) *looking for the blessed Hope, Tit. 2. 12, 13. A man who is much in Heaven, his affections are pre-engaged; and therefore the world doth him little hurt; Birds are seldom taken in their flights; the more we are upon the wing of Heavenly thoughts, the more we escape snares; Hope sets the wheels a going, Phil. 3. 13. I press onward, because of the high price of our Calling; the thought of the end quickneth to the use of means, we faint because we do not consider it more, 1 Cor. 15. 58. Heaven will pay for all.*

4. *It maketh us upright and sincere; looking a squint on secular rewards is the cause of all our declinings, Mat. 6. 2. μισοῦν ἀντι- See the large Annotations.* *they have their rewards; hired servants do not look for the inheritance, and therefore must have pay in hand; if they may have the world, and live in honour and pleasure, they will discharge God from all other promises, A sincere man maketh God his Pay-master, and that chiefly in the other world, Col. 3. 24. we have a Master good enough of him, we need not look for pay elsewhere.*

5. *It supporteth us under those difficulties and afflictions which are wont to befall us in a course of godliness: we can counterbalance what we feel with what we expect, we feel nothing but trouble, and that which we expect is life and glory, Rom. 8. 18. 2 Cor. 4. 17, 18. in this respect hope is called an Anchor, Heb. 6. 19. in the stormy gusts of Temptation it stayeth the Soul, which hope.*

hope we have as anchor of the soul both sure and stedfast, and entereth into that which is within the vail; 'tis a weighty anchor that will not bow or break, and the ground is good, it entereth into that within the vail; and therefore though tempests arise, it will keep us from floating and dashing against the rocks: again, 'tis called a *Helmet*, Eph. 6. 17. The *Helmet of Salvation*, so 1 Thes. 5. 8. the *Helmet* is for the *Head*; in conflicts, as long as we can lift up our heads, and look to Heaven, we are safe.

6. It helpeth us to resist temptations; sin maketh many promises, and prevaileth by carnal hope; *Balaam* was enticed, by promises, to curse Gods people; *Babylons fornications* are presented in a golden cup; men are corrupted with promises of preferment, and greatness, and present accommodations; now hope sets promise against promise, heaven against earth, pleasures at Gods right hand against carnal delights, and taking our fill of lovers; as one nail driveth out another, so doth hope defeat the promises of the world, by propounding the promises of God.

Let us now apply this.

Use 1.

i. It informeth us, that we may look for the reward, without sin. Those men would be wiser then God, that deny us a liberty to make use of the *Spirits motives*; they begrudge Gods bounty, to what end should the Lord propound rewards, but that we should close with them by faith? *graces* may be exercised about their proper objects without sin; it requireth some faith to aim at things not seen, the world is drowned in sense and present satisfactions; they are *Mercenaries* that must have pay in hand, their Souls droop and languish if they do not meet with credit, applause, and profit; they make man their pay-master, they have the spirit of a *servant* that prefer present wages before the inheritance; but to do all upon the encouragements of the mercy of Jesus Christ unto eternal life, argueth grace: 'Twas a relief to the Soul of Christ, to think of the reward, Heb. 12. 2. Christ, as man, was to have rational comforts and humane incouragements; that is sinful indeed, when we would have the reward, but neglect the work; when we would be *Mercenarii* but not *Operarii*; we sever the reward from the duty, and like *Ephraim* are willing to tread the corn but not break the clods, Hos. 10. 11. Again, we look amiss upon the reward when we have a carnal notion of Heaven; as some Jews looked for a carnal *Messiah*, so do some Christians for a carnal Heaven,

for

for base pleasure and fleshly delights, for a *Turkish Paradise*; such kind of hopes debase the heart; or else when we look for it as merited by us, as if we could challenge it by our works, then we are *Mercenaries indeed*; 'tis here, *looking for the mercy of Jesus Christ*:

Again, our *own happiness* must not be our *last end*; there is a *personal happiness* that results to us from the enjoyment of God; now the *glory of God* must be preferred before it.

2. If you would persevere in the love of God and a good frame of heart, revive your hopes, and set the soul a looking and a longing for eternal life; if we *keep the rejoicing of our hope firm to the end*, then we are safe, *Heb. 3. 6*: Courtiers are more polite in their manners than ordinary subjects, because they are more in their Princes eye and company; the oftner we are in Gods Court, the more holy: Well then, be as much as you can in a *usual expectation* of this blessedness.

To this end, 1. *Believe it*; there is a mist upon eternity to a carnal heart, they are led by sense and reason, and believe no more than is evident to a natural principle; but now, *Faith is the evidence of things not seen*, *Heb. 11. 1*. *fancy and nature* cannot out-see time, and look beyond death, *faith* holdeth the candle to *hope*, and then we have a prospect into the other world, and can see an happy estate to come.

2. *Apply it*; 'tis a poor comfortless meditation, to think of a *blessed hope* and the *certainly* of it, unless we have an interest in these things; an hungry man taketh little pleasure in gazing upon a Feast when he tastes not of it; the reprobates hereafter are *lookers on*; and David speaketh of a *table spread for him in the sight of his Enemies*; hope hath never a more lively influence then when we can make out our own propriety and interest, *Job 19. 26*. *I know that my Redeemer liveth.* 2 Cor. 5. 1. *We know that if this earthly Tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building not made with hands, eternal in the Heavens*, 2 Tim. 4. 8. Henceforth there is *laid up for me*, &c. they do not only believe there is an Heaven, but apply it *for me*. You will say, is *hope* only the fruit of *assurance*? I answer, 'tis the fruit of *faith*, as well as of *assurance* or *experience*; but the *sence of our interest* is very comfortable, and in some sort necessary; before we can hope any thing for our selves, our *qualification* is to be supposed; in a matter of such moment a man should not be at an uncertainty; canst thou be

2 Pet. 4. 17.

quies, and not sure of Heaven? not to look after it is a bad sign; a godly man may want it, but a godly man cannot *slight* it: 'Tis possible a man may make an hard shift to creep to Heaven through doubts and fears, and may be *scarcely saved*, whilst others have an abundant entrance: but then you lose your heaven upon earth which consisteth in peace and joy in the holy God, and lose much of the efficacy of hope; for uncertain wavering thoughts work little; therefore assurance cannot be slighted: further I add, by shewing what *Application* there must be, if we cannot attain to Assurance; there are three degrees of Application beneath Assurance: there is *Acceptation, Adherence, and Affiance*.

1. *Acceptation* of Gods offer upon Gods terms, Job 5. 27. Know thou it for thy good, put in for these hopes, and take God to his Word upon this Confidence; make good thy part of the stipulation in the Covenant, and he will not fail thee; this Application there must be in all, an Answer to the demands of the Covenant, 1 Pet. 3. 21. Exod. 24. 6, 7, 8.

2. *Adherence*, Stick close to this Hope in a course of obedience; if we do Gods work we shall not fail of wages, 1 Cor. 9. 26. I run not as one that is uncertain.

3. *Affiance*, resting, waiting upon God for the accomplishment of this blessedness; though not without some doubts and fears as to our own interest, though you cannot say, 'tis yours; yet you will cast your self upon the mercy of God in Christ, as 'tis in the Text, *Looking for the mercy of Christ*; you dare venture your soul in that bottom, this is that committing your selves to him, as unto a merciful and faithful Creator, which the Apostle speaketh of, 1 Pet. 4. 18. You will go on with your work and put your selves in Gods hand for your eternal happiness, because he is merciful, faithful: See also Rom. 2. 7.

3. *Meditate on it often*, meditation is a temperate extasie, a survey of the Land of promise. God biddeth Abraham take a view of Canaan Gen. 13. 14, 15. Surely the more we lift up our thoughts in the contemplation of this blessed estate, the more lively will our hopes be; if every morning we spent a thought this way, it would season the heart against the love of present things; the morning is an emblem of the Resurrection, when we awake out of the sleep of death, and the day cometh which will never have night more, Psal. 17. 15. So in time of troubles we should be

be reckoning upon a better estate, *Rom. 8. 18.* so when you are by *bodily sickness* summoned to the grave; and you are going down to converse with *worms* and *skulls*, then think of a *blessed eternity*, *Job 19. 26.*

The next Point is from that clause [*the mercy*] *The ground Observat. 6.* of our waiting and looking for eternal life is *Gods mercy*, not for any *works* and *merits* of ours; we cannot challenge it as a debt: *sin* and *death* are as *work* and *wages*, but *eternal life* is a *donative*, *Rom. 6. 23.* eternal life is not the *wages* of obedience, as *damnation* is the *wages* of *sin*; why, wherein lieth the difference? I answer, wicked men stand upon their *own bottom*, but *Christ* hath obtained this privilege for us: Wicked works are ours, and they are merely evil, the good that we do is *imperfect*, and *Gods grace* hath the main stroak; so that we are rewarded, rather according to what we have *received*, then what we *have done*; a servant is under a covenant of obedience, and tradeth with his *masters estate*, he doth but his duty, he deserveth nothing: we are bound to do good, and forbidden to sin; when we do what is forbidden, we deserve punishment; but when we do what is commanded, *we do not deserve the reward*, because we are bound; and because we have all from *Gods grace*: as you must pray for eternal life; so must you look for eternal life; if you should say, *give me Heaven*, for I deserve it, natural conscience would blush at the immodesty of such a request; 'tis as great an absurdity when you make your own works the ground of your hope; for in prayer our desires and hopes are put into language, and made more explicate; so that which is our plea in prayer must be the ground of our claim in point of confidence, unless we mean to complement with God.

Well then, 1. Let this encourage us to wait with hope, notwithstanding *infirmities* as well as *afflictions*; what a good master do we serve? he hath provided comforts not only against our *misery*, but against our *unworthiness*; not only *glory* as a reward, but *mercy* as the cause of it, that we may take *glory* out of the hands of *mercy*; he looked upon us not only as liable to *suffering* but *sinning*; and therefore as he hath provided *life and safety* for us, so upon terms of *grace*.

2. It sheweth us how we should ascribe all to mercy, from the beginning to the end of our salvation: we were taken into a

state of grace at first out of meer mercy, 1 Tim. 1. 13. *ἡλπίθην*, I was all to be mercy'd, Tit. 3. 5. Not by works of righteousness that we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us: he doth not barely say, not for our works, but not for our works; *ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ*, not for our best works; those works of righteousness which might be supposed to be foreseen as done by us: so also when we are taken into a state of glory, 'tis still mercy, we can merit no more after grace then before, 2 Tim. 1. 18. *The Lord grant him, that he may find mercy of the Lord in that day.*

Observat. 7.

Once more, this mercy is called [the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ.] Thence observe, That this mercy which we look for is dispensed by Jesus Christ; he purchased it, and he hath the managing of it in the whole œconomy of grace: *he shall take of mine*, saith he, concerning the holy Ghost, and in the last day he distributeth to some judgement without mercy, to others mercy, they are judged upon Gospel-terms.

Well then, 1. Get an interest in Christ, otherwise we cannot look for mercy in that great day, 1 Job. 2. 28. *If we abide in him, then shall we have boldness*; they that sleight Christ in the offers of the Gospel have no reason to look for benefit by him; you will howl and tremble then, and call upon the mountains to hide you from the wrath of him that sitteth upon the throne; they that prize the mercy of Christ now, they find it to the very last; mercy that planted grace in their hearts will then put the crown upon their heads; here 'twas their care to glorify Christ, and to honour him, though with the loss of all; there will Christ glorify them in the presence of all the world.

2. It maketh for the comfort of Christs people and members; our blessed hopes are founded upon the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, and in his hands to dispence them: from thence you may collect,

1. The fulness of this blessedness; an infinite merit purchased it; an infinite mercy bestowed it: surely the building will be answerable to the foundation; 'tis no small thing that we may expect from infinite mercy, and infinite merit; would an Emperour give brass farthings? do men that understand themselves give vast sums for trifles?

2. The certainty of this blessedness; Christ hath the managing of it; he never discovered any backwardness to thy good, nor inclination

clination to thyruine; he died for thee before thou wert born; he called thee when thou wert unworthy; warned thee of dangers, which thou never fearedst; instead of deserved wrath shewed thee undeserved mercy; intercedeth for thee, when thou little thinkest of it; hath been tender of thee in the whole conduct of his providence; visited thee in Ordinances; is mindful of thee at every turn; and will he be harsh to thee at last?

The last Note is from that clause [*unto eternal life*] *The great benefit which we have by Christ is eternal life.*

1. There is life, all that you labour for is for life; that which you prize above other things is life; *Skin for skin, all that a man hath will he give for his life*; That is, he will part with all things, even to his very skin, to save his life.

2. 'Tis an excellent life; the life of sense, which is the beasts, ^{Called 'therefore a Crown of life, Rom. 2. 10.} is better then that vegetative life which is in the plants; and the rational life which is in men, is better then the sensitive; and the spiritual exceedeth the rational, and the glorious life the spiritual. Vegetative life is the vigor of the sap, sensitive life is the vigor of the blood, rational life is the union of the soul with the body, spiritual life is the union of the soul with Christ; and the life of glory exceedeth that in degree, for it standeth in the immediate fruition of God.

3. 'Tis an happy life, not subjected to the necessities of meat and drink; we have then spiritual bodies, 1 Cor. 15. 45. 'Tis not incumbered with miseries, as the present life is, Gen. 47. 9. 'tis a life which we are never weary of; in deep distresses life it self may become a burden: *Elijah said, Take away my life,* 1 Kings 19. 4. but this life cannot be a burden.

4. 'Tis eternal life, this life is but a flower that is soon withered, a vapour that is soon blown over; but this is for ever and ever; as eternity increaseth the torment of the wicked, so the blessedness of the godly: Well then, let this press you to keep your selves in the love of God, till this happy estate come about.

VERSE XXII, XXIII.

*And of some have compassion, making a difference.
And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire, hating even
the garment spotted by the flesh.*

HERE is the second part of the Exhortation, explaining their duty towards others, or teaching them how to behave themselves to them that were gone astray.

[Of some have compassion] the vulgar readerh quite to another sense, and some being reproved : Beza saith, that in some Greek Copies he found it, *ὡς ὑπὲρ ἐλέους διακρινόμενος* ; but the reading which we follow is to be preferred ; the other is but in few Copies, is harsh in construction, and mangleth the whole context : *ὡς ὑπὲρ ἐλέους*, on these have mercy ; 'tis a word that cometh from another word that signifieth bowels, and so noteth not only the gentleness of the censure, but the inward affection ; or as we render it, the compassion which we should have over them : [putting a difference] *διακρινόμενος*, the word hath many significations, judging, discerning, we most fitly render it according to its usual sense, and the Apostles scope.

From the 22. verse observe.

Observ. I.

1. That reprofs must be managed with compassion and holy grief ; our words must have bowels in them ; this is like God : *He doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men, Lam. 3. 33.* there are tears in his eyes when he hath a rod in his hand ; 'tis like Christ, *He wept when he drew near the City, Luke 19. 41.* the Jews were his enemies, and that was the day of his solemn triumph ; yet he wept, *Oh, that thou hadst known the things of thy peace ;* 'tis suitable to the disposition of Gods servants in all ages : *Samuel left Saul, but wept for him, 1 Sam. 25. 35.* Paul speaketh of very wretches that made a design of the Gospel, to gratifie their belly-concernments : *I tell you weeping, saith he, Phil. 3. 18, 19.* There are three grounds of this holy grief.

1. The dishonour done to God, *Psal. 119. 136.* love will be affected with the wrong of the party loved ; if we see a man kill a friend or child whom we love, the sword would pass through our

own hearts, Luke 2. 35. Shall we see them strike at God, and not be troubled?

2. *The harm and destruction men bring upon themselves, that they have no care of their own souls,* Jer. 13. 17.

3. *The proneness that is in our nature to the same sin,* Gal. 6. 1. *Bernards* good man would weep, *ille hodie, & ego cras*, he to day, and I to morrow; there is no sin in their lives, but was in your nature. Well then, it checketh them that speak of others sins, by way of reproofs or censure; but with delight or *potulanzy* of spirit, many reproofs are lost, because there is more of passion then of compassion in them; 'tis spiritual cruelty when you can turn a finger in your brothers wound without grief; reproofs are delightful sometimes out of the sweetness of revenge, or hatred, and ill will to the persons of men, sometimes out of pride, or a desire to vaunt it, and insult over others; sometimes from self-conceit, and non-consideration of our own faultiness: Oh consider, this is not Christian dealing; *Paul* saith, *I am afraid lest when I come among you, my God will humble me, and that I shall bewail many,* &c. 2 Cor. 12. 21. Many a proud Pharisee would have blustered, and threatned them with the severity of discipline; but *Paul* was afraid he should have a heavy load upon his own soul.

Observat. 2.

Again, and more expressly observe, *That in reprovng some must be handled gently*: But who are those that must be handled gently? 1. With the most notorious 'tis good to begin mildly, that they may see our good will, and desire of their Salvation, 2 Tim. 2. 25. hasty spirits cannot brook the least opposition; and therefore are all on fire presently; how did God deal with us in our natural condition? with what lenity and mildness? and *spake comfortably* to us, to allure us out of the Devils snare, Hos. 2. 15.

2. The persons whom we should treat with much compassion, are these.

1. *The ignorant and seduced*; some are of a simple and weak heart; the young men that went with *Absalon* went in the simplicity of their hearts, and knew not any thing, 2 Sam. 15. 11. though swine or dogs be driven with violence; yet poor stray Lambs must be brought home, as the Shepherd brought home his lost sheep upon his shoulders, rejoicing, Luke 15. Many well-meaning men may erre, be not too severe with them, lest *prejudice* make them obstinate; and so from erring brethren, they become heretical.

Errare possum, Hereticus esse
2. Those who

2. *Those that slip of infirmity*: Members must be set in joynt tenderly, Gal. 6.1. The carnal world reflects with most sharpness upon the infirmities of Gods people; let us learn to distinguish betwixt an evil course and inconsiderate slips; and as long as there is any thing of Christ, be not too severe, 2 Thes. 3. 15.

3. *The afflicted in Conscience*: We must not speak to the grief of those whom God hath wounded; the Apostle would have the incestuous person comforted, lest he should be swallowed up of too much grief, 2 Cor. 2.17. When Adam was troubled, though God reproved him, yet he made him a coat of skins to cover his nakedness; when Peter was weeping, Christ sendeth a comfortable message to him; Go tell my Disciples, and Peter, &c. Mark 16.7.

4. *If they erre in smaller matters*: We must not deal with notes as with beams, and put the wicked and the scrupulous in the same rank; nor the gross Heretick, and those that mistake in point of Church order, while the judgement is found in Fundamentals, and the practice is reformed; we should use meekness, till God reveal the same thing, Phil. 3. 15, 16. God hath given them light in most things, and those which are most necessary; and in time will discover those truths to them whereof they are yet ignorant.

5. *The tractable*, and those of whom we have any hopes; Rehoboam would deal roughly, and so lost ten tribes; Tertulian was even forced into the tents of the Montanists, by the indiscreet zeal of some who were too forward with censures; and still men are lost that otherwise would be reclaimed; differences are made irreconcilable by the imperious sowreness and bitterness of those that manage them; dashing storms wash away the seed, whereas gentle showers refresh the earth; men left without hope grow desperate.

From that [putting a difference] In all censures and punishments there must be choice used and discretion. Prudence is the Queen of graces, different tempers require different remedies; the Prophet saith, in Husbandry, the fitches are not threshed with a threshing instrument, neither is a cart-wheel turned about upon the Cummin; but the fitches are beaten out with a staff, and the Cummin with a rod; so all tempers do not need a like dispensation, God himself putteth a difference; some are brought in with violence, others gently; grace forceth open the door of the heart sometimes,

times, and cometh in like a mighty rushing wind; at other times it breatheth upon the soul with a gentler blast; some are caught with gail, 2 Cor. 12. 16. Others directly knocked down; this sheweth,

1. That Ministers had need be wise, to know how to suite their Doctrine, to distinguish between person, action, circumstances; deep learning, much godliness, and great prudence make an accomplished Minister; 'twas said of Chrysestom, that he was διὰ τὴν ταπεινότητα τοῦ νοῦ, too easie; and so did not many times manage things so wisely; and so of Epiphanius, διὰ τὴν βαλυσαν εὐλάβειαν ἀπὸ τοῦ αἵματος, 'tis good to be well read in persons, to note circumstances, and times; Paul striketh in with Felix, treateth of an apt lesson before him and Drusilla, Acts 25. 25. Felix was a very incontinent person, and very unjust; Paul, to give him his due, treateth of righteousness and temperance, and judgement to come.

Tacitus saith that he did, servili animo excercere imperium per libidinem & savitiam.

2. That Ministers should give every one their portion; Zuinglius when he had flashed terrors in the face of the hardened sinner, would add, Bone Christiane, hæc nihil ad te, tender Conscience, this is not for thee: We must rightly divide the word of truth, that is, not by crumbling and mincing a Text of Scripture; but giving every one their portion; terror to whom terror belongeth, and comfort to whom comfort.

2 Tim. 2. 15.

3. It sheweth what care we should take to know the state of our flock, that we may know how to apply our selves to them, Col. 4. 8. Tychicus was sent to the Colossians to know their state; it also obligeth private Christians to consider each others temper, gifts, frame of heart, that we may the better suite our selves to do and receive good. See Heb. 10. 24, 25.

Prov. 27. 23.

In the twenty third verse, is the other part of that duty which they owed to straying Brethren. [And others] those that are of another strain and temper [save] that is, do your endeavour to be instruments of their Salvation; See 1 Tim. 4. 16. Thou shalt save thyself, and them that hear thee [with fear] that is, by some more severe course, either making the admonition more sharp, or denouncing judgement against them, or by the reverend use of Church-censures, which were then dreadful, as being solemnly managed and accompanied with some sensible marks of Gods vengeance, 1 Cor. 5. 5. anguish of spirit, or possibly torments of body, [pulling them out of the fire] some make it an allusion to the several ways of pur-

Theod. lib. 3.
15.

purgation by *water* or by *fire*; these latter like the harder metals are to be pulled out of the fire; but this seemeth to be forced: Rather 'tis an allusion to the snatching of a man, whom we would save, out the fire, where he is likely to be burned; we then not only nicely reach out the hand, but pluck them out *with violence*; or it may be an allusion to *Lots* being plucked out of *Sodom* by the *Angels*, Gen. 19. 16. [*bating the garment spotted by the flesh*] 'tis a figurative speech, some apply it to the avoiding of the appearance of evil; there is a story of *Valentinian* in *Theodore*t, who accompanying *Julian the Apostate* to the Temple of *Fortune*, and those that had charge of the house sprinkling their holy water upon the Emperour, a drop falling upon his garment, he beat the Officer, *μολύνθαι φήσας ἢ καθαίρειν*, saying, *that he was polluted, not purged*; and tore off the piece of his garment upon which the drop lighted, *bating* (saith the Historian) *the garment spotted by the flesh*: But rather the expression alludeth to the old Law, concerning legal uncleanness, Lev. 15. 4. *The bed whereon he lieth is unclean*, and verse 17. *Every garment is unclean*; and therefore, I suppose, it noteth their avoiding the society of such evil persons, as in the greater excommunication they were wont to do; which separation was a solemn profession, how much the Church did detest the wickedness.

Observation 1. *There is a time when we may use severity; others save with fear*; weak Physick doth but stir bad humours, not purge them out; nettles if gentle touched sting the more; fair, plausible lectures do hurt to seared Hypocrites; there is a time for the Trumpet as well as the Pipe; when we pipe to men in the alluring strains of grace, and they dance not, *Then cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a Trumpet*, Isa. 58. 1. but who are these others, who must be dealt with roughly? I Answer,

1. The Seducers themselves, these must be laid forth in their colours, though the seduced must be pitied, see Tit. 1. 11. with 13. *They subvert whole houses, teach things which they ought not; rebuke them sharply*: the Prophet flouteth at Baals Priests, 1 Kings 18. 27. and Christ every where giveth the Pharisees their due load, *Ob, ye generation of Vipers, and Scribes and Pharisees, and Hypocrites*.

2. Those that are hardened, and grown perverse and stubborn; when the iron is blunt we put to the more strength, softers strains would but harden these more.

3. Those

3. Those that are *secure Libertines*, wallowing in sin and pleasure, we had need put them in fear; though it be distastful to the flesh, 'tis healthful for the soul; none hate you worse then those that suffer sin upon you; if physick gripe the bowels, 'tis for your good; if the Chirurgeon launce and cut you, yet he doth not hate you.

2. Observe this severity must arise from zeal, a desire of Gods glory, and their salvation; save them with fear, (saith the Apostle) plucking them out of the fire, see 2 Cor. 10. 8. The Lord hath given us an authority for your edification, not destruction; so that either God will have us use gentle means, or violent, to a gentle purpose, Tit. 1. 13. Rebuke them sharply, that they may be found in the faith. Well then, 1. Take Admonitions in good part, 'tis a sharpness needful, and profitable, he is not a friend that deal-eth mannerly with you when you are in the fire.

2. It reproveth the undue use of Church-censures; weighty Ordinances are not to lacquey upon trifles, nor to be prostituted to carnal ends; the power of the keys is a great trust, and is to be faithfully managed; we read of abuses of this power in Scripture, Job. 9. 34. and 16. 2. 2 Ep. Job. 10. The watch-men may take away the Spouses vail, Cant. 5.

Again observe, That fear is a way to reclaim obstinate sinners, 'tis sweet to use arguments of love; but sometimes we must lay before men the terrors of the Lord, 2 Cor. 5. 11. Paul an elect vessel made use of threatenings, 1 Cor. 9. 27. Surely men have a mind to sleep in sin, when they would always have us come in the still voice. Dives was more charitable than they would have us to be; he would fain dismiss a flamy Messenger to his Brethren, Luke 16. 27, 28. Sluggish creatures need the goad; in innocency God saw it needful to propound a threatening, and fenced the forbidden fruit with a curse, Gen. 2. 17. if a boisterous lust bear down all milder motives, 'tis good to scare the soul with threatenings of the Law; fear is good, but the servility or slavishnesse of it is sinfull: fear it self, or a tender sense of Gods wrath, and displeasure against sin, is so far from being a sin, that it is a grace rightly conversant with its object: Gods wrath and vindicative justice is the proper object of fear; and so it must be looked upon by the converted and unconverted. 1. For the unconverted, 'tis their great fault and security, that they do not consider what a dread-

ful thing it is to lie under the wrath and displeasure of God, *Psal.* 90. 11. there is but a step between them and Hell, and they mind it not; tell them of their danger, and they scorn it. 2. *the converted* are to fear Gods wrath, *Mat.* 10. 28. 'tis a duty Christ enjoyneth to his own Disciples; the words do not only contain a description of the person, who ought to be feared; but of the ground and reason, why he ought to be feared: *Fear him who is able to cast body and soul into hell fire*, is as much as, *because he is able to cast body and soul into hell fire*; as appeareth by the *Amittibetis*, *Fear not them that kill the body*, that is, *because they are able to kill the body*; see also, *Heb.* 12. 28, 29. Though we are not to fear Hell, as an evil likely to fall upon us (when we are assured of Gods favour) yet we must fear it, as an evil which God hath power to inflict, and will, certainly, upon those that disobey him; we are to fear it, so as to eschew it with a fear of flight and aversion, not with a perplexing and doubting fear.

Well then, so far 'tis good; but now the *servility*, that is sinful; the *servility* is seen, partly in the *disingenuity* of it, when our own smart and torture is more feared then the displeasing of God; as a slave careth not how his masters goods go to wrack, so he may avoid stripes: partly because 'tis accompanied with an enmity against God; slavish fear hateth God for his holiness, and feareth him for his wrath; they wish his destruction, that there were no God: Partly because it causeth but an incomplete reformation, it makes a man forbear sin, but not hate sin; a wolf may be scared from the prey, that yet keepeth his preying and devouring nature: Partly because there is torment and perplexity in it, 1 *Joh.* 4. 18. a tender conscience is a blessing; but a stormy conscience is a judgement; slaves are exercised with the torture and rack of perplexing fears.

Observat. 4. Again, from that [*pulling them out of the fire*] A poor guilty secure sinner is like a drunken man that is fallen into the fire: he is so in three respects.

1. In point of security; a drunkard is ready to be burned, but he feelth it not; so they are upon the brink of hell, but are not sensible of it; *Eph.* 4. 19. *past feeling*.

2. In point of danger; sinners are often compared to a brand in the burning, *Zeck.* 3. 2. *Amos* 4. 11. they are already under the

the wrath of God; as a believer *hath eternal life*, whilst he is here in the world; they are *in the suburbs of hell*, the fire is already kindled.

3. In point of *impotency*, and *inability* to help themselves; a sottish drunkard that is over-poised by his own excess, lieth where he falleth; and except some friendly hand lift him up, there he perisheth: and just so 'tis with sinners, they are pleased with their condition; and if they be not *soundly roused up*, and awakened, they *lie and die*, and *fry in their sins*: Oh, then pluck them out of the fire, *warn them to flee from the wrath to come*, *Mat. 3. 7.* Minister, art thou sensible of the *danger of souls*? are thy words as *burning coals*? do they *fret through the heart of a sinner*? Christian, art thou sensible of the danger of thy carnal neighbour? they are burning in their beds, and thou wilt not cry, *fire, fire!* they are besotted with *lust and error*, and wilt thou let them alone? Oh unkind!

The next Point is from the last clause, [*hating the garment spotted by the flesh*.] *Some sinners are so unclean, that we cannot keep company with them without defilement; see 1 Cor. 5. 9, 10, 11. to 2 Thes. 3. 14. and 2 Tim. 3. 5. From such turn away: now the reason is, partly for our own caution; evils made familiar by a customary converse seem less odious: Partly to vindicate the honour of Christ, and the societies of his people; the blemishes of their miscarriages redound to the whole Church, Heb. 12. 15. till they be disclaimed: Partly to punish the offenders, that it may be a means to reduce them, 2 Thes. 3. 14. 'tis a sad thing to live an out-cast from Gods people; let obstinate and scandalous sinners think of it; and let others learn to bear reverence to Church-censures.*

Observat. 5. These are spots in your love-feasts, ver. 12.

VERSE XXIV.

Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory, with exceeding joy.

THE Apostle having perswaded them to duty, now commendeth them to the Divine grace; as 'tis usual with the Apo-

files to shut up their *Exhortations* with prayer; to intimate, that the fruit of all must be expected from God, without whose blessing *Exhortations* or *Endeavours* would be nothing.

[*To him that is able to keep you*] it may be referred either to God, or to Christ, as Mediator: [*from falling, ἀπαισέουσ, that is, from total Apostacy*; God is able to keep us altogether from sin, if we speak of his *absolute power*; but he speaketh here of such a power as is engaged by *promise* and *office*: Christ who is the Guardian of believers, hath received a charge concerning them, and is to preserve them from *total destruction*. [*And to present you faultless.*] This clause sheweth more clearly that Christ is intended in these expressions; for 'tis his Office to keep the Church till it be presented to the Father; and at length will present them [*faultless,*] 'tis Eph. 5. 27. *Without spot and blemish: [before the presence of his glory,]* that is, at his glorious appearance, Col. 3. 4, when he shall come to judge the world: [*with exceeding joy*] is meant rather *passively* on our part, then on Christ's; though it will be a sweet interview between Christ and Believers; and he will rejoyce to see us, as we to see him.

The Observations are these.

Observ. 1.

1. *All means without the Lords grace will not keep us from falling*: The Apostle requireth duty of the faithful, but asketh grace of God; he had before said, *keep your selves in the love of God*, and now, *to him that is able to keep you from falling, &c.* we fall nor, because God doth not let go his hold; our necessities and difficulties are so great, that nothing less than a divine power can support us, 1 Pet. 1. 5. *Ye are kept by the power of God, through faith, unto salvation*: This power of God is set a work to encourage hope, not to check industry; use means; but look for his blessing: We cannot stand a moment longer than God upholdeth us; we are as a staff in the hand of a man; take away the hand, and the staff falleth to the ground; or rather as a little infant in the Nurses hand, Hof. 11. 3. if we are left to our own feet, we shall soon fall and get a knock; *created grace* will never hold out against so many difficulties: one of the Fathers bringeth in the flesh, saying, *Ego deficiam*, I shall fail; the world, *ego decipiam*, I will deceive them; the Devil, *ego eripiam*, I will take them away; but God saith, *ego custodiam*, I will keep them, never fail them, nor forsake them, and there lieth our safety; the world is full of snares,

etc. we

we are carnal, and there are carnal persons about us; and the Devil is a restless enemy, watching all advantages; and surely having so much pride in us, and love of pleasures, and so many worldly desires, we give them him but too too often; therefore unless God keep us, we shall be tossed to and fro like feathers, with the wind of every temptation.

2. Observe, That 'tis a great relief to faith, to consider that *God is able to keep us*; accordingly you find it urged in Scripture, see *John 10. 28, 29.* *1 Pet. 1. 5.* *Rom. 14. 4.* *He shall be bolden up, for God is able to make him stand*; the two Pillars of the Temple were *Boaz and Jachin*, strength, and *he will establish*; the power of God, and mercy of God, are the two Pillars upon which our confidence standeth: the power of God is a relief upon a three-fold account.

1. Because the great trouble of the soul ariseth from a *disbelief of Gods power*; we stumble at his *can*, rather than at his *will*; one said, *Mt. 8. 2.* *Lord if thou wilt thou canst*; but another said, *Mt. 9. 22.* *If thou canst do anything, help us*; when we consider our *own infirmities*, and *corrupt inclinations*; and the *sundry temptations and allurements* that we meet with in the world; the *many lets and discouragements* which befall us in our heavenly course, we think we shall never hold out to the end; so that want of power is our greatest trouble: but when we *stay our selves upon the name of God*, and consider how almighty his power is to bear down all created opposition, 'tis a great relief to the soul.

2. Because the power of God is engaged to help us, it doth not simply follow that because God *can* keep us; that therefore he *will* keep us, but God hath promised to keep us, *Jer. 32. 40.* and he hath power enough to make good his word; and therefore we cannot miscarry.

2. There is a charge laid upon Christ; we are put into his hands, *Joh. 10. 28.* he hath not only leave to save the Elect, but a charge to save the Elect, see *Joh. 6. 37, 38, 40.* they are under his care; and surely he will imploy the whole power of the God-head, rather than be unfaithful; he is to be answerable for those that are given to him, at the last day.

3. The invincible power of God is set awork by his *unchangeable love*; so that we may be confident that he, what he is able

to do, he will do for us; the power and authority of a relation or friend of ours in Court is an encouragement, whilst the friendship and relation lasteth.

3. The last reason is, because the power of God is many ways exercised for our preservation; partly by way of *internal influence*, swaying the heart, and inclining it to his fear; if the will of man were exempt from the dominion of God, then God had made a creature too hard for himself; partly in *over-ruling* and *disposing the temptation*, that it shall not be too great for us, 1 Cor. 10. 13. *Faithful is God, who will not suffer you to be tempted above what you are able to bear*; partly in *removing the temptation*, rebuking Satan and his Instruments, &c. Well then, commit your souls to Christ with the more confidence, 2 Tim. 1. 12. *I know whom I have believed, and that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him, unto that day*; when the difficulties of Salvation are sufficiently understood, there will need *explicit thoughts of the divine power*, before we can with any confidence trust our selves with Christ, and go on with encouragement in well doing.

Observat. 3.

3. Observe, *Jesus Christ will one day make a solemn presentation of his people to God*; the Apostle saith, here, *he will present you*: There is a threefold presentation spoken of in Scripture. 1. One made by *believers themselves*, Rom. 12. 1. *I beseech you by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice*; and Rom. 6. 13. *Yield your selves unto God*, *μετασχηματίζετε τὰ σώματα ὑμῶν ὡς θύματα*. When we consent to set apart our selves for Gods use, to be his in all estates, to act for him in all his businesses, then we are said to *yield up* or *present our selves to God*.

2. By *Christs Messengers*, they have a charge; and when they have done their work they present us to God, 2 Cor. 11. 3. *That I may present you a chaste Virgin to Christ*; 'tis sweet, when Ministers can say, Here are the fruits of my labours, the pledges of my faithfulness.

3. This presentation is applied to Christ himself; now two ways is Christ said to present us.

1. To himself.

2. To God.

1. To himself, Eph. 5. 27. *That he might present it to himself a glorious Church*; in that place our interest in Christ, and his interest

terest in us, is represented by marriage; in the world we are *contracted*, but there *presented*; actually brought to him, when fitted for his use; as *Either* when she was chosen out from among the Virgin to be wife to the King, she was first purified, and supplied with garments, odours and sweet ointments, out of the Kings house; and then when the months of her purification were accomplished, she was presented to him, *Epi. 2.* from ver. 9. to 12. so we are *chosen, elected to grace, and then purified and prepared*; but at the Kings cost; we have garments of Salvation out of Christs Wardrobe, and odours and sweet ointments out of his Store-house; and then when spot and wrinkle is done away, we are *presented* to him; he is said to do it, because he hath the main stroke in this work.

2. To God: so 'tis said, *Col. 1. 22. That he may present you in his sight*; that is, in the sight of God the Father; for the antecedent you find in ver. 19. *It pleased the Father, &c.* Thus Christ is said to give up the Kingdom to the Father, *1 Cor. 15. 24.* to 28. that is, the Church; the Kingdom is put for the subjects governed: Now Christs presenting us to God may be looked upon, either, 1. As an account of his charge; in effect he saith, *I have done the work for which thou hast sent me.* Christ is under an office and obligation of faithfulness; he hath a trust of which he must give an account; he is to take care of the persons of the Elect, to justify, sanctify, and glorify them in his own day; now that it may appear that he is not unfaithful in his trust; he doth present them to God, as having fully done his work; so that to doubt of his unwillingness to pardon, or sanctify, or glorify, is in effect to charge unfaithfulness and disobedience upon him; for Christ as Mediator is subordinate; *He is Gods,* *1 Cor. 3. 18.* and *1 Cor. 11. 3.* The head of Christ is God; namely with respect to this office and charge; so he is under God, and to give an account to him; he hath undertaken to make up all breaches between God and us; as to the merit and satisfaction, he gave an account a little before his going to Heaven, *John 17. 4.* but as to the application, to every party concerned he will give an account in the last day, when he will present himself and all his flock, saying, *Behold I and all the little ones which thou hast given me,* *Heb. 2. 13.* when all the Elect are gathered into one troop and company, and not one wanting.

2. As an *Alt* of delight, and rejoycing in his own success, that all that were given to him are now fit to be settled in their blessed and glorious estate: Christ taketh a great deal of delight to see the *proof* and *virtue* of his death, and that his blood is not shed in vain; as a Minister taketh delight in those whom he hath gained to God; *What is our hope, our joy, our crown of rejoycing? are not ye in the day of the Lord?* 1 *Thess.* 2. 19. if we rejoyce thus in the fruit of our Ministerial labours, surely Christ much more; we have not such an interest in them as Christ hath; and the main virtue came from his death and Spirit; 'tis said, *Isa.* 53. 11. *He shall see of the travail of his soul, and be satisfied;* that may be understood either of his foreseeing from all eternity, or of his actual seeing when the whole is accomplished; if you understand it of his foreseeing, the expression is not altogether alien from the point in hand: when Christ foresaw the good success of the Gospel, and what a company he should gain to himself in all ages, he rejoyced at the thought of it; *Well,* saith he, *I will go down and suffer for poor creatures upon these terms:* but rather I understand it of his sight of the thing when it is accomplished; when he shall see his whole family together, met in one Congregation; *Now* (saith he) *I count my blood well bestowed, my bitter agony well recompenced; these are my Crown, and my rejoycing:* Look as the first person delighted in the fruits of his personal operation; for so 'tis said, *Exod.* 31. 17. *In six days God made Heaven, and on the seventh day he rested and was refreshed;* he was refreshed, not in point of weariness, but delectation; he rejoyced in the product of his wisdom, power, and goodness: so Christ in the work of redemption, when his death turneth to a good account, he will delightfully present you to God, as the proof of it: *These are those whom I have redeemed, sanctified, and kept, &c.*

3. 'Tis an *Alt* of his love, and recompence to the faithful; they have owned him in the world, and Christ will own them before God, men, and Angels; there is no Saint so mean but Christ will own him, *Luk.* 12. 8. *The Son of man shall confess him, &c.* Father, this is one of mine: As for his enemies, Christ will see execution done upon them; *Slay them before my face,* *Luk.* 14. 27. for his friends, he will own them publicly, and that they be honoured before the presence of his glory.

Well then, see that you be of the number of those whom Christ will

will present to God, if he hath purified you to himself, *Tit. 2. 14.* he will present you to himself; if you be set apart for God, *Psal. 4. 3.* you shall be brought to God, the work is begun here; privately 'tis done at our deaths, when the soul as soon as 'tis out of the body is conveyed by Angels to Christ, and by Christ to God, and publickly and solemnly, at the day of his coming, then he presents the Elect as a prey snatch'd out of the teeth of Lyons, but *spiritually* the foundation is laid, when you dedicate your selves to God, *Rom. 12. 1.* and walk so as Christ may own you with honour and credit in that great day; if you be the scandal of his Ordinances, the reproach of your profession, can Christ glory in you then as a sample of the virtue of his death? Surely no.

Again observe, *That when Christ presenteth the Elect, he will present them faultless*; that is, both in respect of justification and sanctification; this was intended before the world was, *Eph. 1. 4.* He hath chosen us before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him, in Love; but is not accomplished till then: now we are humbled with many infirmities and sins; but then presented holy, unblameable, and unreprouable in his sight, *Col. 1. 22.* the work is undertaken by Christ, and he will carry it on till it be compleat; here the wedding garments are a making, but then put on.

1. The work must be begun; here the foundation is laid as soon as we are converted unto God, *1 Cor. 6. 11.*

2. This work increaseth daily more and more, *1 Thes. 5. 23.* we are not faultless, but Christ will not rest till we be faultless; he is sanctifying further and further, that we may be blameless at his coming he will pursue the work close till it be done.

3. 'Tis so carried on for the present, that our justification and sanctification may help one another; the benefit of justification would be much lessened, if our sanctification were compleat; and our sanctification is carried on the more kindly, because the benefit of justification needeth so often to be renewed and applied to us; if our inherent righteousness were more perfect, imputed righteousness would be less set by, in this great imperfection under which we now are; we are too apt to fetch all our peace and comfort from our own works, to the great neglect of Christ and

his righteousness; therefore doth the Lord by little and little carry on the work of grace, that by the continual sense of our defects, and the often making use of Justification, we may have the higher apprehensions of Gods love in accepting us in Christ; the reliques of sin trouble us, as long as we are in the world; and so the benefit is made *new* to us, which otherwise would wax old and out of date; and the benefit being made new increaseth our love to God, Luke 7. 47. and putteth us upon the study of holiness.

4. At the last day all is fully accomplished, Col. 1. 22. Well then, let us wait upon God with encouragement, and press on to perfection, upon these hopes: surely we shall be *faultless*, Christ would never have given us earnest, if he meant not to stand to his bargain.

2 Cor. 1. 22.

Observat. 5.

The next clause is [*before the presence of his glory*] note thence, that *Christ's presence at the day of Judgement will be exceeding glorious*; for he will then appear, not only as the *Son of man*, but as the *Son of God*, Mat. 16. 27. he will then appear, not only as the *Saviour*, but as the *Judge of the world*, both for the terror of the *wicked*, 2 Thes. 1. 8. and as a *pattern of that glory which shall be put upon the godly*, Col. 3. 4. and Phil. 3. 21. Well then, let us not despise Christ, now he lieth hid under the *vail of the Gospel*, but with comfort let us expect his coming; for when he is glorious we shall share with him, and *appear also in glory*: and let us not think shame of his service, whatever disreputation the world shall put upon it.

Observat. 6.

The last particle in the words, is that, [*with exceeding joy*] from thence note, *The day of Christ to the godly is a joyful day*; when others *bowl*, you shall *triumph*; when others are dejected, and call upon the *Mountains to cover them*, Rev. 6. 16. you shall *lift up the head*, for your redemption draweth nigh, Luke 21. 28. Christ will be glad to see you, whom he hath carried in his heart from all eternity; for whose sake he came into the world and died; and for whom he went back again into heaven, that he might negotiate with God in your behalf; and whom he now cometh to receive unto himself, that you may be for ever *there where he is*: and surely you that have received Christ into your hearts, and loved him though *unseen*, and served him though with the *loss and hazard of all*, will be glad to see him in all his glory and royalty;

ty; especially when you shall hear him calling upon you, *Come, ye blessed of my Father, enter into the Kingdom prepared for you.* Oh, that we could act over this joy aforehand! faith is a bird that can sing in winter; before Christ came in the flesh, the Patriarchs got a sight of him by the Eagle-eye of faith, and rejoiced at the thought of it, *Joh. 8. 56. Your Father Abraham rejoiced to see my day, and he saw it and was glad.* Oh, surely our hearts should be warmed with the thought of that blessed day, when we shall be able to say, *Yonder, even there is our great Lord!*

VERSE XXV.

To the only wise God, our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, now and ever, Amen.

THe Apostle, in this verse, goeth on with that *doxology* which he had begun in the former; here you may take notice of the description of the person to whom the praise is given, he is described. 1. By his excellency, *the only wise God.* 2. By our interest, and the benefit we receive by him, *and our Saviour.*

1. The ascription of praise, *Be glory, &c.* there is 1. what is ascribed, *glory, majesty, dominion, and power.*

2. The duration, how long he would have this ascribed, *now and ever.*

3. Manner, in what fashion 'tis ascribed, in the particle, *Amen,* with which all is sealed and closed up; this particle implieth,

1. *Our confidence,* that it shall be so, 2. *Our hearty affection,* that it might be so; *love faith,* let it be; and *faith* it shall be; for faith is a *prophetick grace,* in prayer it answereth its self.

But let us go over these particulars more fully and distinctly; from the description of the person [*to the only wise God, our Saviour*] that Christ is God, we proved before, on verse 4. see pag. 222. and 230, 231, 232, 233, 234. and that Christ is a Saviour, and how, on the same verse, pag. 227, 228, 229. I shall only now observe,

Observ. 1. 1. That God is wise. 2. That God is only wise. 3. That Jesus Christ as Mediator hath a right to this attribute.

I begin with the first, That wisdom is ascribed to God, Gods wisdom is a distinct notion from his knowledge; he doth not only know all things, but hath ordered and disposed them with much counsel; the wisdom of God is asserted in the Word, Job 9. 4. and Job 12. 13. and proved there by what he hath bestowed upon man; he that teacheth man knowledge shall not he know? Psal. 94. 10. Whatever man hath from God, God hath it in himself in a more eminent degree: and 'tis also evidenced by the works of God, as in the works of creation, providence, and the methods of his graces.

Psal. 104. 24.
1 Cor. 1. 21.

1. Much of his wisdom is seen in creation, there his wisdom is discovered in the excellent order of all his works, their mutual correspondence and fitness for the several ends, and services for which they were appointed; the order of the world sheweth the wisdom of God, the order of placing the creatures; see Prov. 3. 19, 20. The Lord by Wisdom hath founded the earth, by Understanding hath he established the Heavens, by his knowledge the depths are brooken up, and the clouds drop down the dew; the earth is set lowermost as the foundation of all the rest, the Sea pen'd up within its channels, the air above them both, and the Heavens higher than all, the Stars and Planets placed in the Firmament, and the fishes in the Sea; the order of making, God proceeding from things imperfect to perfect; first the rude mass, then the Heavens and the vast earth, and glorious creatures, but without life, then the herbs and plants that have life, but not sense and motion, then the brute creatures that have sense and motion, but not reason, then man with a reasonable Soul, after his own image; in this order, you may observe, first the dwelling place is appointed, then the food, then the creature that feedeth upon it, the beasts upon the herbs, and man upon the beasts: The Queen of Sheba was astonished at Solomons wisdom, when she perceived the well ordering of his family; certainly, if we did observe the order of nature, we would stand wondering more at the wisdom of God: Next observe the correspondence that is between all the parts of the world, compared sometimes to a building; wherefore God is called *τεχνης*, an artificial Builder, Heb. 11. 10. In this great house every part conspireth to the beauty, service, and decency

decency of the whole, the *roof* is Heaven; and therefore the *Spheres* are called *chambers* and *stories* in the Heaven, *Amos* 9. 6. The *foundation* is earth, *Job* 38. 5, 6. The *Stars* and glorious *Luminaries* are the *windows*, the *Sea* the *water-course*, &c. Sometimes 'tis compared to the frame and structure of mans body, *Heb.* 11. 3. *The worlds were framed*, 'tis in the original, *κατασλίσσας*, set in joyn, as all the members of the body are tied together by several ligaments, &c. Sometimes to an *Army*, *Gen.* 2. 1. *The Heavens were finished* and *all the host* of them. Order is necessary every where, but especially in an *host*, there every one must keep in his rank and station; thus the *Stars* have their *courses*, *Judges* 5. 20. and the *clouds* their *courses*, *Job* 37. 12. yea, the *Grashoppers* march as an *army*, *Joel* 2. 15. The next thing that sheweth the wisdom of God, is their *fitness* for *use* and *service*; the work-mans skill is as much commended in the use of an instrument, as in the *making* and *framing* of it; the *upper heaven's* fitted to be the everlasting mansion of the *Saints*, the *middle Heaven* to give us *light*, and *heat*, and *influence*, the *air*, or *lower Heaven*, for *breath*, the *earth* for *habitation*, the *Seas* for *navigation*, the *herbs* and *plants* for *food* and *medicine*, &c. Look upon the *bodies* of *living creatures*, and tell me, if there be not a wise God; *Galen* saith, there are 600. *muscles* in the body of man, and every one fitted for *ten uses*; so for *bones*, *nerves*, *arteries* and *veins*, whosoever observeth their *use*, *situation*, and *correspondence* of them, cannot but fall into admiration of the wisdom of the Maker, who hath thus exactly framed all things at first out of *nothing*; and still out of the *froth* of the *bloud*: The wisdom of men and Angels cannot mend the least thing in a flye; the *figure*, *colour*, *quality*, *quantity*, of every worm, and every flower, with what exactness is it ordered! as if God had nothing else to do but to bring forth such a creature into the world, as the product of his infinite Wisdom.

2. *Providence*, Gods wisdom is much seen in the sustentation and governing of all things, *Eph.* 1. 11. *He worketh all things according to the Counsel of his will*; do but observe a little how all things are put into a subserviency to Gods purpose; sometimes the *smallest things* occasion events of the *highest* concernment; the occasion of *Josephs* greatness in *Egypt* was a *dream*; a lie cast him into prison, and a *dream* fetched him out: sometimes the
most

most casual things to us are the most necessary means to accomplish that which God aimeth at; *A certain man drew a bow at peradventure, and slew the King of Israel between the joyns of the harness,* 1 Kings 22. 34. *Contingencies to us are infallible events,* as to the purposes of God: *voluntary things* that depend upon the will of man, fall under the ordination of the will of God; there is more wisdom shewn in ruling a skittish horse, then in rolling a stone or dead thing; God sheweth his wisdom in guiding the courses of the stars; but much more in disposing the heart of man, *Prov. 21. 1.* there is nothing so confused; but if you look upon it in its result and final tendency, there is beauty and order in it; the tumults of the world, the prosperity of the wicked, carnal men think them the disgrace and blemish of providence, whereas they are the ornament of it, *Psal. 92. 5.* *Lord how glorious are thy works? thy thoughts are very deep!* man is discontented because he cannot fathom the deep thoughts of providence: nothing so opposite, so bad, but God can bring good out of it; the sins of men set forth the beauty of providence, as shadows and black lines in a Picture set it off the more, see *Acts 4. 28.* and *Job 5. 12, 13.* Christ hath been beholding to his enemies as much as to his friends; their potent opposition hath occasioned the further increase of his Kingdom.

3. In the methods of his grace, so I call all the transactions of God about the salvation of sinners, from first to last; the rejection of the Jews, and calling of the Gentiles, *Rom. 11. 33.* *Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God:* the various dispensations used in the Church before the Law, under the Law, and time of the Gospel, these are called *πολυπλοκή σοφία*, the manifold wisdom of God, *Eph. 3. 10.* Redemption by Christ, the great plots of Heaven, called the hidden wisdom of God in a mystery; and without controversie a great mystery, *1 Tim. 3. 16.* that which Angels desire to pry into; Gods Master-piece, wherein all things by a rare contrivance are ordered for Gods glory, and mans good; the wonder of it will take up our hearts to all eternity; to see the ruines of the Fall so exactly repaired, the glory of God salved, the comfort of man provided for, *ὁ βῆθος*, Oh, the depth of this glorious mystery!

Again, The various acts of love, whereby God subdueth sinners

to himself; this taking sinners in *their months*, and disposing of unthought of circumstances and passages of providence in order to their conversion: Once more, the over-ruling of all events to further the eternal blessedness of the Saint, *1 Cor. 8. 26*. In all these I have forborn particular illustrations, that the discourse may not swell up into too great a bulk.

Now whosoever shall seriously consider these things, will certainly conclude, *God is wise*; but further, consider the usual concomitants of Gods wisdom, and then we may come to make some use of this meditation.

Wisdom in God is accompanied with *immaculate holiness*, and *infinite power*; in the Devils there is *great cunning*, *great power*, and *much wickedness*; in man there is *much shame*, *little power*, and *less wisdom*; Gods power and wisdom are often counted in the expressions of Scripture, *Job 9. 4. He is wise in heart*, and *mighty in power*, so *Job 36. 5. He is mighty in strength and wisdom*; the two formidable properties in an adversary, and the desirable properties in a friend: so see *1 Cor. 1. 25*. Again, 'tis joyned with holiness, he is *most wise*, and *most holy*, *glorious in holiness*, and *rich in wisdom*. Doing all these things in holiness requires

Well then, let us often admire the wisdom of God; look up to the *Heavens*; and what do you find there? The work of a wise God, *Jer. 10. 12*. Look to the structure of all things round about you, and what offereth its self to your thoughts? by his wisdom he hath established the world, *Jer. 10. 12*. Look within you, and you cannot chuse but say, *Oh God, I will praise thee, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made*, *Psal. 139. 14*. Look into the Scriptures and consider the stupendious mysteries that are revealed there; of the *Trinity in unity*, *God manifested in our flesh*, a *Virgin conceiving*, *Christ dying*; and can you hold from crying out, *Oh, the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God*? *Rom. 11. 33*. view these things again and again; we cannot take up all of God, in one, or many, or all our meditations.

2. Let not it be a bare speculation, but improve it, 1. To quicken you to prayer; where should we go for wisdom when we need it, but to the wise God? see *Job 28. 12. Jam. 1. 5. Job 32. 9. Solomon asked wisdom and had it*. 2. Improve it to thanks; when you are able to discern your way and your work,

Prov.

Prov. 2. 6. 3. Improve it to waiting, *Isa. 30. 8. He is a God of judgement, blessed are all they that wait for him*; when things grow cross, let the wise God alone till you see the end of his work; will you be his Councillor, and teach him how to manage his affairs? *he knoweth how to deliver the godly, &c. 2 Pet. 2. 9.* 4. Improve it to *patience and contentation*; the wise God knoweth how to make use of thee in every condition; where ever thou art, say, *I am there where God hath set me*, God knoweth what is better for me, then I do my self; he that hath put all things in their places hath put me in this place, and here I will glorifie him, *1 Cor. 7. 22. every cross is chosen and elected, as well as your persons*; there are *secrets of wisdom in providence*, that are not always to be found in the surface and outside of it, *Job. 11. 6. though it appear in a way of rigor, yet God may have a design in it of mercy to me, and glory to himself.*

Observ. 2. The next Point is, That *God is only wise*; see the same expression, *1 Tim. 7. 17. and Rom. 16. 27. why, you will say, this is a communicable Attribute, God hath endowed man with a spirit of wisdom, and humane prudence is an emblem and resemblance of divine prudence, how then is God only wise? I Answer, Wisdom in God is in such an infiniteness and excess, that wisdom in man is but folly in comparison of it, there is none, as he; there is none wise but from him; in short, God in three respects is only wise.*

1. *Originally, and independently wise*, not by communication from another, but of himself; our wisdom is but a ray communicated from the Father of lights, *Jam. 1. 17. a drop from from the Ocean, a beam from the Sun*; the whole knowledge of the Angels is but a *spark of this light.*

2. *God is essentially wise, and so only wise*: do not understand God to be wise, as if wisdom had made him wise, as it happeneth among the creatures; in them wisdom is a *separable quality*, distinct from their Essence: now Gods Wisdom is Himself, and Himself is his Wisdom; the perfections of the creature are like the *gilding* which may be layed on upon vessels of wood or stone, the matter is one thing, and the varnish or ornament is another; but the perfections of God are like a vessel made of pure beaten gold, where the matter and the splendor, or adorning, is the same.

3. God is *infinitely wise*, and so only wise ; as the candle giveth no light when the Sun shineth ; our wisdom is bounded within narrow limits, and extendeth but to a few things ; but Gods to all things : We count them fools that can only manage petty matters, buy, and sell, and keep out of harms way ; such fools are all creatures to God, whose wisdom is unlimited and incomprehensible ; they that can manage a small Commonwealth with Advice and Counsel, are cried up for wise men ; but now God manageth the affairs of the whole world, both visible and invisible ; he careth for all things, from the *Ant* to the *Angels* ; nothing so small as to escape his knowledg ; nothing so great as to burden his mind ; the Sun doth with the same easiness shine upon the whole world, as upon one field ; so doth God manage the government of the whole world as of one person or creature : our wisdom is gotten by *learning* ; but *who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord ?* Isa. 40. 17. our wisdom is bettered by *experience*, therefore old men are most prudent ; but Gods Wisdom is incapable of increase, as being in an infinite fulness ; we are often deceived ; men of the greatest sagacity and cunning fail in their plots and enterprizes, and so *their wisdom is turned into folly* ; but 'tis not so with God, *His Counsel shall stand*, Psal. 33. 11. there can no difficulty occur but what is foreseen ; he goeth not upon *probability* and *conjecture*, but *certain foreknowledge* : Man can attend but upon one care at once ; *various thoughts scatter the mind*, and *weaken it* ; but God in one *moment of understanding* seeth all things, and wisely disposeth of all things ; Gods Wisdom doth not deliberate with *hesitancy*, or consult with *doubt* ; his thoughts are *simple*, and not *successive*, and in the way of discourse. Thus you see what good reason there is why God should be said to be only wise.

Well then, let not the creature seem wiser than God, and cavil at what he hath revealed, because we understand it not ; we cannot know the nature of an *Ant* ; we are puzzled in the least creature ; no wonder then if humane Reason grow giddy when it prieth into the deeps of God ; there should be *ὑπακοή* *πίστεως*, the obedience of faith to all that is revealed ; and divine truth, like pills, must be swallowed, rather than chewed, received upon Gods *single Authority*, when we see no reason for them ; for God is only wise. Again, when you think of the perfections of

God you must raise your thoughts above the Law, and all manner of all created beings.

Observ. 3. The next point is, *That Christ Jesus our Saviour is worthy to be accounted the only wise God.* Christ is wise, as he is God, and as he is Man.

1. As he is God; so he is called the *wisdom of the Father*, 1 Cor. 1. 24. and represented to the ancient Church under this title, as Prov. 1. 20. and Prov. 8. *per totum*; Wisdom is there spoken of as a *person*, and the descriptions there used are proper to Jesus Christ; some suppose the Heathens had some *traditional knowledge* of this mystery and appellation; for as Christ, the wisdom of the Father, was eternally and ineffably begotten in the divine Essence; so they worshipped a *Goddeſs* whom they called the *Goddeſs of Wisdom*, and fained that she was begotten by *Jupiter* of his own brain; and they called her *Αθνα*, which word is much like in sound with the Hebrew Word, *Adonai*, Lord.

2. As he is man: He received the habits of all-created knowledge and wisdom, as all other graces, without measure, Job. 3. & so tis said, Col. 2. 3. *In him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.* Well then, since Christ hath brought down wisdom to us in our own nature, let us be more studious to get it into our hearts: As Mediator he is fitted to make us wise to Salvation, and appointed by God to be wisdom to us, 1 Cor. 1. 30.

Observ. 3. Once note more, from the other title that is here given to Christ, [*our Saviour*,] *Those that have had any benefit by Christ will be very much affected with his praise.* There is a double ground of exalting Christ, a *sight of his excellency*, and a *sense of his benefits*; and there is a double notion by which our honouring of Christ is set forth, *praise and blessing*; *praise* hath respect to his excellency, and *blessing* to his benefits, Eph. 1. 3. We may praise a man for his worth, though we have no benefit by him; and so we are bound to praise God for the excellency of his nature, though he had never done us good; but now when he is our *God*, and our *Saviour*, and hath shewed us so much of his goodness and mercy in Christ, we should be ever praising him, Phil. 4. 20. *Now unto God, nd our Father, be glory for ever and ever, Amen*: Glory is due to him as God, much more as our Father;

ther; his *worth* and *excellency*, though he were a stranger to us, doth deserve an acknowledgment; but when we consider what he is to do for us, and what he hath done for us, then we can hold no longer; the heart being affected with a sense of his kindness, breaketh out, *To our Father, to our Saviour*, be glory for ever and ever. Well then, consider the Lords excellencies more, and observe his benefits, and work them upon the heart, till you be filled with a deep sense of his love, and find such an impulsion in your spirits, as you cannot hold from breaking out into his praise.

I come now from the *description* to the *ascription*, *To him be glory*. *Observ. 5.* *ry, &c.* Can we bestow any thing upon God? or with any real worth and excellency to be superadded to him? I answer, No; the meaning is, that those which are in God already may be, first, more *sensibly manifested*, *Isa. 64. 2. Make thy name known among the Nations.* 'Tis a great satisfaction to Gods people when any thing of God is discovered; they value it above their *own benefit* and safety; see *Psal. 115. 1.* they prefer the glory of mercy and truth before their deliverance.

2. More *seriously and frequently acknowledged*; 'tis a great pleasure to the Saints to see others praise God, *Psal. 107. 8. Ob that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men.*

3. More *deeply esteemed*; that God may be more in request, more in the hearts of men and Angels; Gods children do not count it enough that God is glorified by themselves, but they desire also that God may be glorified by others; as fire turneth all things near it into its own nature, so is grace diffusive; good men are loath to go to heaven alone; they would travel thither by troops and in company.

But let us more particularly take a view of this ascription, and so first what is ascribed, *glory, majesty, dominion, and power.* Let us open these words. *Glory* is, *clara cum laude notitia*, excellency discovered with praise and approbation; and noteth that high honour and esteem that is due to Christ. *Majesty* is the next word, which implieth such greatness and excellency as maketh one honoured and preferred above all; therefore a stile usually given to Kings; but unto none so due as Christ, who is *King of Kings*, and *Lord of Lords.* The third term is *dominion*, which

implieth the sovereignty of Christ over all things, especially over the people whom he hath purchased with his blood. The last word is, *power*, which signifieth that all-sufficiency in God, whereby he is able to do all things according to the good pleasure of his will.

From hence observe,

Observat. 6.

1. *A gracious heart hath such a sense of Gods worth and perfection, that it would have all things that are honourable and glorious, ascribed to him; therefore are there divers words here used: When we have done our utmost we come short; for Gods name is exalted above all blessing, and above all praise, Nebem. 9. 5. Yet 'tis good to do as much as we can: Love to God will not be satisfied with a little praise, I will praise him yet more and more: love enlargeth the heart towards God; if there be any thing more excellent, he shall have it; well then, 'tis a sign of a dead heart, to be a niggard in praises, to be sparing, careless, or cold this way.*

Observ. 7.

2. *When we think of God, 'tis a relief to the Soul to consider of his glory, majesty, dominion and power; for this is that which the Apostle would have to be manifested, acknowledged, and esteemed in God, as the ground of our respect to him; it encourageth us in our service; we need not think shame of his service to whom glory, and power, and majesty, and dominion belongeth: It hearteneth us against dangers; surely the great and glorious God will bear us out in his work; it increaseth our awe and reverence; shall we serve God in such a sleight fashion as we would not serve the Governour? Mal. 1. 8. 'tis a lessening of Gods majesty; you do not treat him as a great and glorious Potentate, Mal. 1. 14. It inviteth our Prayers; to whom should we go in our necessities, but to him that hath Dominion over all things, and power to dispose of them for the glory of his majesty: It increaseth our Dependance, God is glorious, and will maintain the honour of his name, and truth of his promises: When we are daunted by earthly Potentates, 'tis a relief to think of the majesty of God, in comparison of which all earthly Grandure is but the dream of a shadow: Again, God that hath a sovereignty over all things, and such an almighty power to back it will not be wanting to do that which shall make for his glory.*

Observ. 8.

2. The next consideration, in this Ascription, is the duration,

on,

on, now and ever: Thence note, *The Saints have such large desires for Gods glory; that they would have him glorified everlastingly, and without ceasing, they desire the present age may not only glorify God, but the future; when they are dead and gone, the Lord remaineth; and they would not have him remain without honour; they do not take death so bitterly, if there be any hopes that God will have a people to praise him: and their great comfort now is the expectation of a great Congregation, gathered from the four winds, united to Christ, presented to God, that they may remain with him, and glorify him for evermore; 'tis the comfort of their hearts to see this Congregation a making up every day, that there are Saints and Angels to praise God, whilest others grieve and dishonour him; they prize their own salvation, upon this ground that they shall live for ever, to glorify God for ever; see Eph. 3. 21. Psal. 41. 13. Psal. 106. 48.* Now this they do, partly from their love to *Gods glory*, which they prize above their *own salvation*, Rom. 9. 3. Partly in thankfulness to God for his *everlasting love* to them; God is from everlasting to everlasting, and his love is from everlasting to everlasting, Psal. 103. 17. he was their God, and will be their God for ever and ever; and therefore they purpose to be his people, and to praise him for ever and ever. Well then, get these large desires for Gods glory, that he may be honoured in *all ages*, and in *all places*, Psal. 113. 2, 3. What have ye done in a tendency hereunto, that your posterity may praise God? do you labour to promote the *knowledge of Christ*, and the *succession of Churches*, all the ways that you can? zeal in your place is a good argument that you are well affected in this kind; as a *Master of a family* hast thou taken care to keep Religion alive among thy children, when thou art dead and gone, Gen. 18. 19. as a *Merchant* hast thou promoted Religion with thy *Traffique*? Deut. 33. 18, 19. as a *Magistrate* dost thou take care to secure the interest of Christ to posterity, that the succession of Churches may not be cut off; *Ministers*, have you been *witnesses* for God to the present? and behaved yourselves as *Trustees* for the next age? have you taken care that God may be honoured then? that we do not transmit prejudices against the ways of God, and corruptions in Doctrine and Worship to posterity? Oh, where is this affection, this wishing, *To him be glory now and ever?*

The

The last thing in this Inscription, is the Particle *Amen*, which is *signaculum fidei*, & *votum desiderii nostri*; it signifieth an hearty consent to Gods promise, and a steady belief that it will continue to all generations: this word is often put at the end of *Prayers* and *Doxologies* in Scripture, see *Rev.* 5. 13, 14. *Rom.* 16. 27. *Phil.* 4. 20. &c. and sometimes 'tis doubled, for the greater vehemency, *Psal.* 51. 13. *Psal.* 72. 19. *Psal.* 89. 52. and it seemeth by that passage of the Apostle, that antiently it was audibly pronounced by the people in publick Assemblies, at the conclusion of prayers, *1 Cor.* 14. 16. and since that *Hierom* telleth us, that *Amen ecclesie instar tonitruu reboabat*, that the *Amen* was so heartily founded out by the Church, that it seemed like a crack of thunder: Certainly, 'tis good to conclude holy exercises with some vigor and warmth; natural motion is swifter in the end and close, so should our spiritual affections be more vehement, as we draw to a conclusion; and when the Prayer is done, put out the efficacy of our faith and holy desires in a strong *Amen*, that it may be to you according to the requests of your hearts, and you may come away from the Throne of grace as those that have had some feeling of Gods love in your Consciences, and are persuaded that he will accept you, and do you good in Jesus Christ.

Observat. 9.

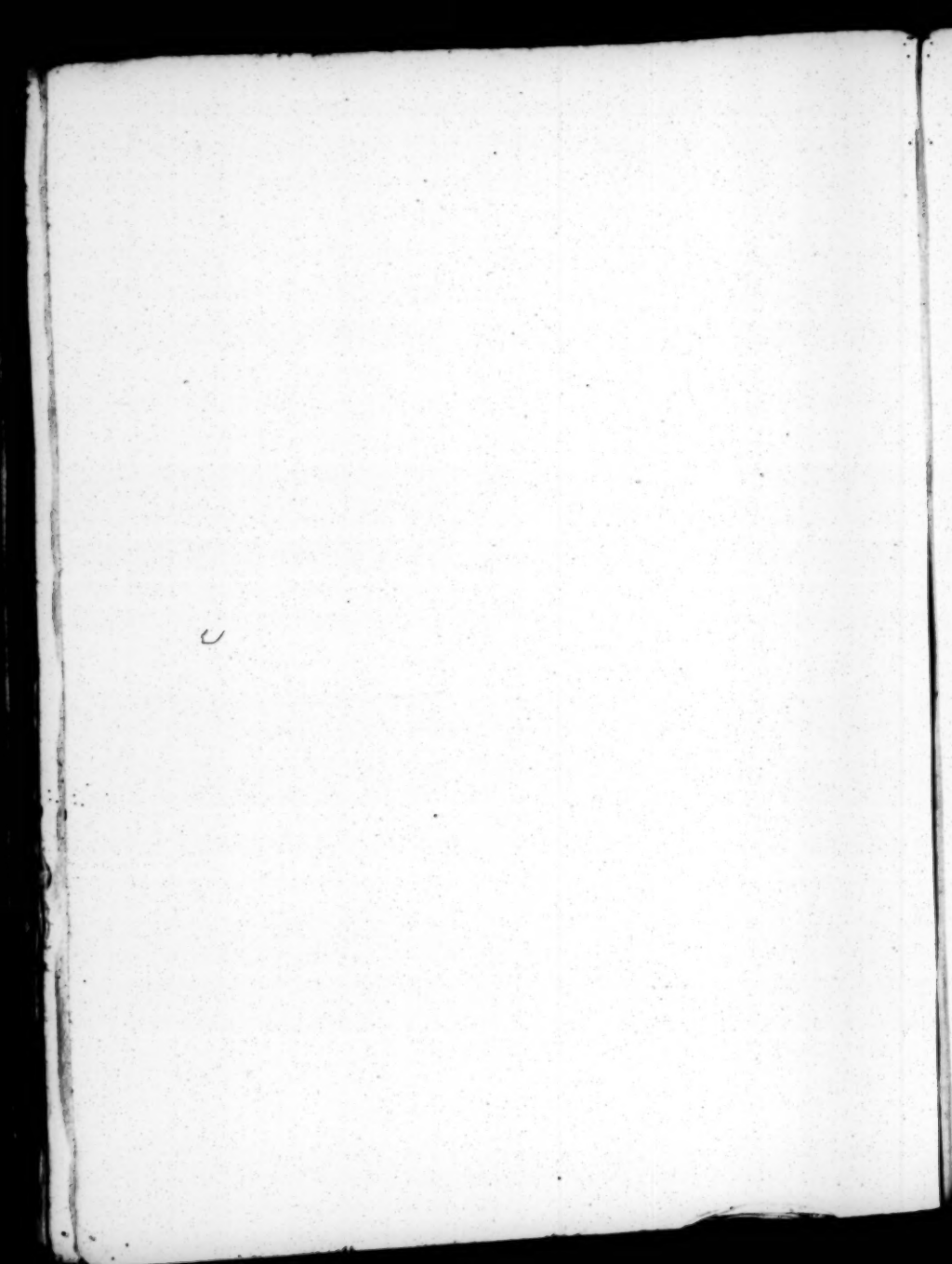
Observat. 10. Again observe, There should be an *Amen* to our praises, as well as to our prayers, that we may express our zeal and affection to Gods glory, as well as to our own profit; many with the Lepers will say *Amen*, to *Jesus, Master, have mercy on us*, but we are not as ready to say *Amen* to this, to whom be glory, &c. our *Hallelujahs* should sound as loud as our *Supplications*; and we should as heartily consent to Gods praises, as to our own requests.

Observat. 11. Lastly, In desiring the glory of God to all ages, we should express both our faith and love; faith in determining that it shall be, and love in desiring that it may be so; with all our hearts, both are implied in the word *Amen*; it will be so, whatever changes happen in the world, God will be glorious; the Scene is often shifted, and furnished with new Actors; but still God hath those that praise him, and will have, to all eternity. Well then, let your faith subscribe, and put to it its seal to the glory of God in Christ: and let earnest love interpose, Lord, let it be so, yea, Lord,

Lord, let it be so; heartily desire it; and with the whole strength of your soul, set to your seals without fear; 'tis a request that cannot miscarry, and follow it with your *heartly acclamations*; the world shall continue no longer, when God shall have no more glory by it; here you may be sure you pray according to Gods Will; and therefore may take it for granted; only *follow it earnestly*; say, Lord, whatever become of us, and our matters, yet let thy Name be glorified: *Amen*, Lord, let it be even so. Now,

Blessed be his glorious Name for ever, and let the whole earth be filled with his glory: Amen, and Amen, Psal. 72.
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ERRATA.

Page 118. line 9. after *not adde only.* p.249.l.25. for *unbelieve*
r. believe. p.252.l.26. for *had r. hand.* p.464.l.32. for *Pfal.*
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